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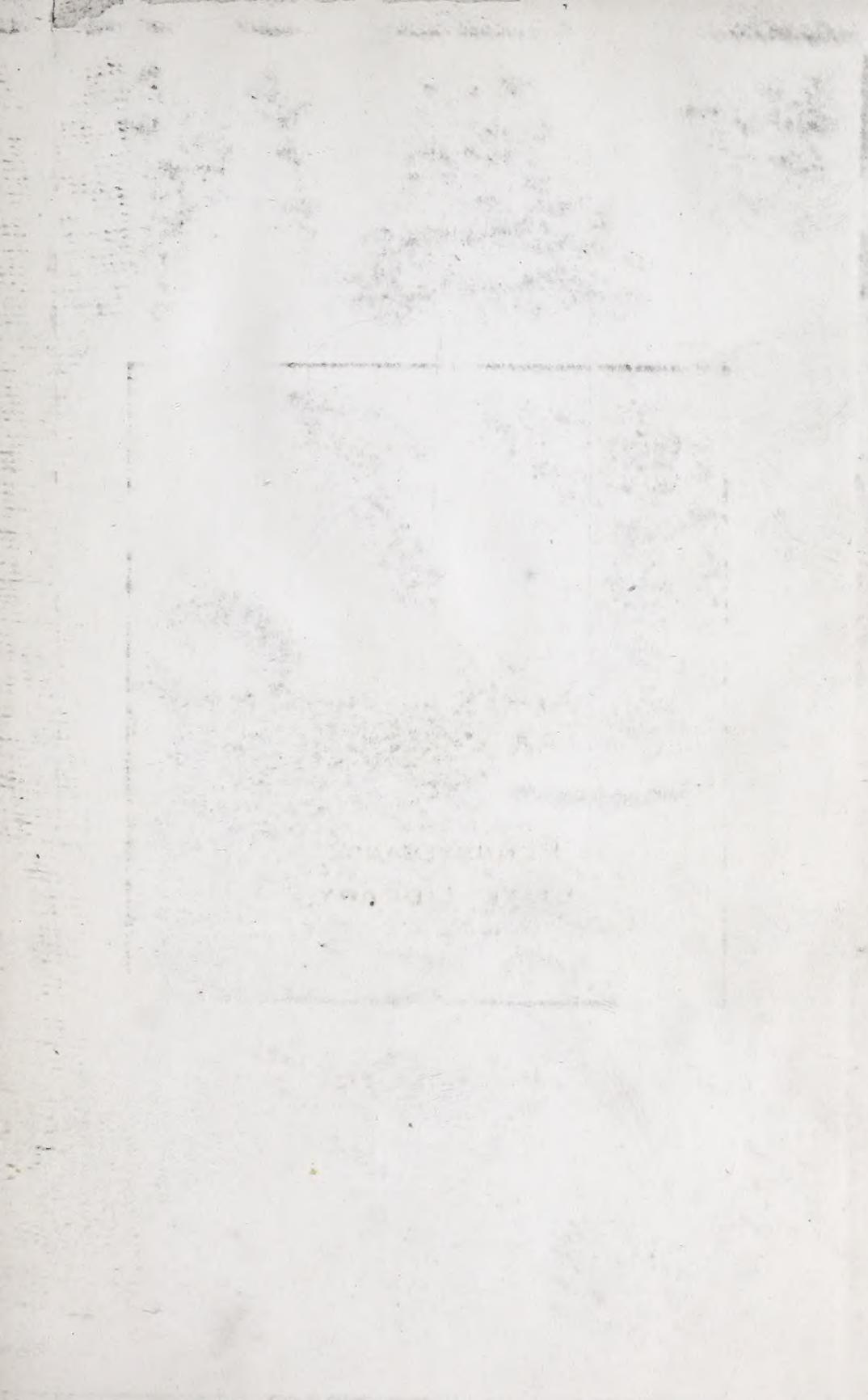
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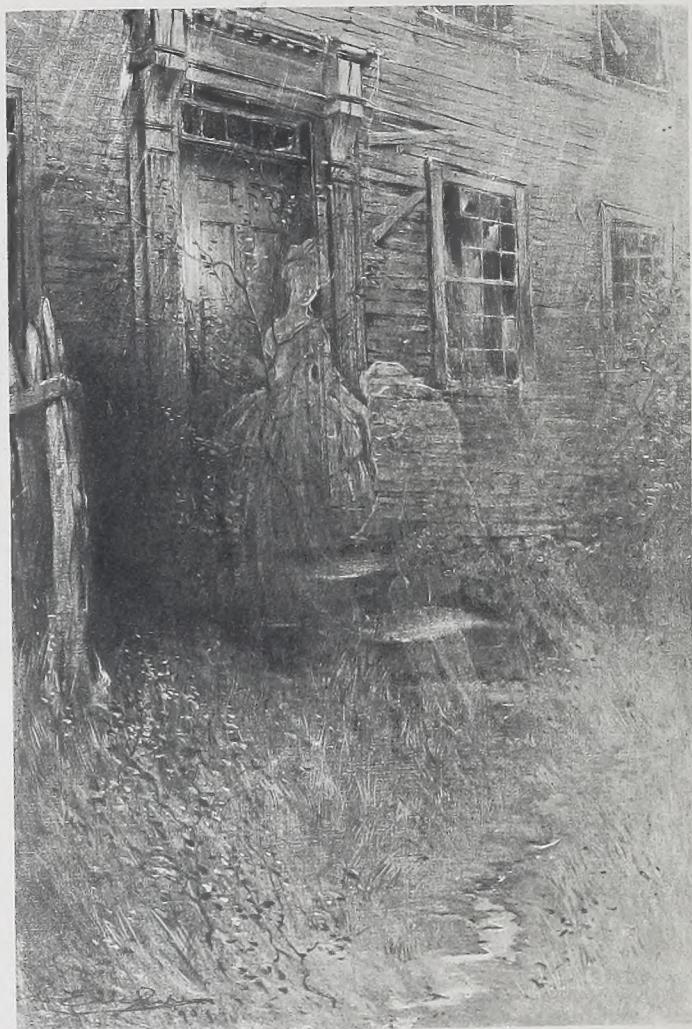
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THE POEMS OF   
MADISON CAWEIN

VOLUME III

NATURE POEMS



THE POEMS OF  
MADISON CAWEIN

*Volume III*

NATURE POEMS

Illustrated

WITH PHOTOGRAVURES AFTER PAINTINGS  
BY ERIC PAPE

INDIANAPOLIS  
THE BOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

Undreamed of things that happened long ago Page 8  
*A House in the Hills*

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MADISON CAWEIN

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PUBLISHERS

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CAWEIN

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BROOKLYN, N. Y.

TO

DOCTOR HENRY A. COTTELL

WHOSE KIND WORDS OF FRIENDSHIP AND APPROVAL

HAVE ENCOURAGED ME WHEN I MOST

NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT

59372



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## PROLOGUE

*There is a poetry that speaks  
Through common things: the grasshopper,  
That in the hot weeds creaks and creaks,  
Says all of summer to my ear:  
And in the cricket's cry I hear  
The fireside speak, and feel the frost  
Work mysteries of silver near  
On country casements, while, deep lost  
In snow, the gatepost seems a sheeted ghost.*

*And other things give rare delight:  
The guttural harps the green-frogs tune,  
Those minstrels of the falling night,  
That hail the sickle of the moon  
From grassy pools that glass her lune:  
Or,— all of August in its loud  
Dry cry,— the locust's call at noon,  
That emphasizes heat, no cloud  
Of lazy white makes less with its cool shroud.*

*The rain,— whose cloud dark-lids the moon,  
That great white eyeball of the night,—*

## PROLOGUE

*Makes music for me; to its tune  
I hear the flowers unfolding white,  
The mushroom growing, and the slight  
Green sound of grass that dances near;  
The melon ripening with delight;  
And in the orchard, soft and clear,  
The apple redly rounding out its sphere.*

*The grigs make music as of old,  
To which the fairies whirl and shine  
Within the moonlight's prodigal gold,  
On woodways wild with many a vine:  
When all the wilderness with wine  
Of stars is drunk, I hear it say—  
“Is God restricted to confine  
His wonders only to the day,  
That yields the abstract tangible to clay?”*

*And to my ear the wind of Morn,—  
When on her rubric forehead far  
One star burns big,—lifts a vast horn  
Of wonder where all murmurs are:  
In which I hear the waters war,  
The torrent and the blue abyss,  
And pines,—that terrace bar on bar  
The mountain side,—like lovers kiss,  
And whisper words where all of grandeur is.*

## PROLOGUE

*The jutting crags,— dark, iron-veined  
With ore,— the peaks, where eagles scream,  
That pour their cataracts, rainbow-stained,  
Like hair, in many a mountain stream,  
Can lift my soul beyond the dream  
Of all religions; make me scan  
No mere external or extreme,  
But inward pierce the outward plan  
And learn that rocks have souls as well as man.*



IN THE SHADOW OF THE  
BEECHES



## IN THE SHADOW OF THE BEECHES

In the shadow of the beeches,  
Where the fragile wildflowers bloom;  
Where the pensive silence pleaches  
Green a roof of cool perfume,  
Have you felt an awe imperious  
As when, in a church, mysterious  
Windows paint with God the gloom?

In the shadow of the beeches,  
Where the rock-ledged waters flow;  
Where the sun's slant splendor bleaches  
Every wave to foaming snow,  
Have you felt a music solemn  
As when minster arch and column  
Echo organ worship low?

In the shadow of the beeches,  
Where the light and shade are blent;  
Where the forest-bird beseeches,  
And the breeze is brimmed with scent,—

## IN THE SHADOW OF THE BEECHES

Is it joy or melancholy  
That o'erwhelms us partly, wholly,  
To our spirit's betterment?

In the shadow of the beeches  
Lay me where no eye perceives;  
Where,— like some great arm that reaches  
Gently as a love that grieves,—  
One gnarled root may clasp me kindly  
While the long years, working blindly,  
Slowly change my dust to leaves.

## 'A FALLEN BEECH

Nevermore at doorways that are barken  
Shall the madcap wind knock and the moonlight;  
Nor the circle which thou once didst darken,  
Shine with footsteps of the neighboring moon-  
light,  
Visitors for whom thou oft didst hearken.

Nevermore, gallooned with cloudy laces,  
Shall the morning, like a fair freebooter,  
Make thy leaves his richest treasure-places;  
Nor the sunset, like a royal suitor,  
Clothe thy limbs with his imperial graces.

And no more, between the savage wonder  
Of the sunset and the moon's up-coming,  
Shall the storm, with boisterous hoof-beats, under  
Thy dark roof dance, Faun-like, to the humming  
Of the Pan-pipes of the rain and thunder.

Oft the Satyr-spirit, beauty-drunken,  
Of the Spring called; and the music measure  
Of thy sap made answer; and thy sunken

## A FALLEN BEECH

Veins grew vehement with youth, whose pressure  
Swelled thy gnarly muscles, winter-shrunken.

And the germs, deep down in darkness rooted,  
Bubbled green from all thy million oilets,  
Where the spirits, rain and sunbeam suited,  
Of the April made their whispering toilets,  
Or within thy stately shadow footed.

Oft the hours of blonde Summer tinkled  
At the windows of thy twigs, and found thee  
Bird-blithe; or, with shapely bodies, twinkled  
Lissom feet of naked flowers around thee,  
Where thy mats of moss lay sunbeam-sprinkled.

And the Autumn with his gypsy-coated  
Troop of days beneath thy branches rested,  
Swarthy-faced and dark of eye; and throated  
Songs of hunting; or with red hand tested  
Every nut-burr that above him floated.

Then the Winter, barren-browed, but rich in  
Shaggy followers of frost and freezing,  
Made the floor of thy broad boughs his kitchen,  
Trapper-like, to camp in; grimly easing  
Limbs snow-furred and moccasined with lichen.

### A FALLEN BEECH

Now, alas! no more do these invest thee  
With the dignity of whilom gladness!  
They — unto whose hearts thou once confessed  
thee  
Of thy dreams — now know thee not! and sadness  
ness  
Sits beside thee where, forgot, dost rest thee.

## A COIGNE OF THE FOREST

The hills hang woods around, where green, below  
Dark, breezy boughs of beech-trees, mats the  
moss,

Crisp with the brittle hulls of last year's nuts ;  
The water hums one bar there ; and a glow  
Of gold lies steady where the trailers toss  
Red, bugled blossoms and a rock abuts ;  
In spots the wild-phlox and oxalis grow  
Where beech-roots bulge the loam, and welt  
across

The grass-grown road and roll it into ruts.

And where the sumach brakes grow dusk and  
dense,

Among the rocks, great yellow violets,  
Blue-bells and windflowers bloom ; the agaric  
In dampness crowds ; a fungus, thick, intense  
With gold and crimson and wax-white, that sets  
The May-apples along the terraced creek  
At bold defiance. Where the old rail-fence  
Divides the hollow, there the bee-bird whets  
His bill, and there the elder hedge is thick.

### A COIGNE OF THE FOREST

No one can miss it; for two cat-birds nest,  
Calling all morning, in the trumpet-vine;  
And there at noon the pewee sits and floats  
A woodland welcome; and his very best  
At eve the red-bird sings, as if to sign  
The record of its loveliness with notes.  
At night the moon stoops over it to rest,  
And unreluctant stars, in whose faint shine  
There runs a whisper as of wind-swept oats.

## A HOUSE IN THE HILLS

Old hearts that hold the saddest memories  
Are the most beautiful; and such make sweet  
Light, happy moods of younger natures which  
Their sadness contacts and so sanctifies.

And such to me is an old gabled house,  
Deserted, and neglected, and unknown,  
Lost in the tangled hollow of its hills,  
Dark, cedaried hills, and dreamy orchard-lands;  
With but its host of shrouded memories  
Haunting its ruined rooms and desolate halls,—  
Pathetic with their fallen finery,—  
And whispering through its cob-webbed crevices  
And roomy hearths, that sigh with ceaseless  
wind,  
Undreamed of things that happened long ago.

Here in gray afternoons I love to sit,  
And hear the running rain along the roof;  
The creak and crack of noises that are born  
Of silence or mysterious agencies;

## A HOUSE IN THE HILLS

The fitful footfalls of the wind adown  
Grand, winding stairways, massy banistered;  
A clapping door and then a sudden hush  
As if the old house held its breath to see,—  
Invisible to me,— a presence pass,  
That brings a pleasant terror stiffening through  
The tingling veins and staring from the eyes.  
Then comes the rain again along the roof;  
And in rain-rotted room and rain-stained hall  
The drip and whisper of the wind and rain  
Seem viewless footsteps of the sometime lords  
And mistresses who lived here in the past.  
And could the state material but assume  
A state clairvoyant, then the dream-drugged eyes,  
Perhaps, might see, from room to dusty room,  
The ghosts of stately gentlemen glide by,  
And glimmering ladies, all beruffled, trail  
Long, haughty silks miraculously stiff.

## THE WIND

*“Wind of the East, if thou pass by the land  
where my loved ones dwell, I pray,  
The fullest of greetings bear to them from me,  
their lover, and say  
That I am the pledge of passion still.”—*

FROM THE ARABIC.

The ways of the wind are eerie,  
And I love them all:  
The blithe, the mad, and the dreary,  
Spring, winter, and fall.

When it tells to the waiting crocus  
Its beak to show;  
And hangs on the wayside locust  
Bloom-bunches of snow.

When it comes like a balmy blessing  
From the musky wood,  
The half-grown roses caressing  
Till their cheeks burn blood.

## THE WIND

When it roars in the autumn season,  
And whines with rain,  
Or sleet, like a mind without reason,  
Or a soul in pain.

When the woodways, once so spicy  
With bud and bloom,  
Are desolate, dead and icy  
As the icy tomb.

When the puffed owl, crouched and frowsy,  
In the hollow tree,  
Sobs, dolorous, cold, and drowsy,  
Its shuddering melody.

Then I love to sit in December  
Where the big hearth sings,  
And, dreaming, forget and remember  
A host of things.

And the wind — I hear how it strangles,  
And wails and sighs  
On the roof's sharp, shivering angles  
That front the skies.

How it shouts and romps and tumbles  
In attics o'erhead;  
In the great-throated chimney rumbles,  
Then all at once falls dead;

## THE WIND

Then comes like the footsteps stealing  
    Of a child on the stair,  
Or a bent, old gentleman feeling  
    His slippered way with care.

And my soul grows anxious-hearted  
    For those once dear —  
The long-lost loves, departed,  
    In the wind draw near.

And I seem to see their faces —  
    Not one estranged —  
In their old accustomed places  
    Round the wide hearth ranged.

And the wind, that waits and poises  
    Where the shadows sway,  
Seems their visionary voices  
    Calling me far away.

Then I wake in tears and hear it  
    Wailing outside my door,—  
Or is it some wandering spirit  
    Weeping upon the moor?

## RAIN IN THE WOODS

When on the leaves the rain persists,  
And every gust brings showers down;  
When copse and woodland smoke with mists,  
I take the old road out of town  
Into the hills through which it twists.

I find the vale where catnip grows,  
Where boneset blooms, with moisture bowed;  
The vale through which the red creek flows,  
Turbid with hill-washed clay, and loud  
As some wild horn a huntsman blows.

Around the root the beetle glides,  
A burnished beryl; and the ant,  
Large, agate-red, a garnet, slides  
Beneath the rock; and every plant  
Is roof for some frail thing that hides.

Like knots against the trunks of trees  
The lichen-colored moths are pressed;  
And, wedged in hollow blooms, the bees  
Hang pollen-clotted; in its nest  
The wasp has crawled and lies at ease.

## RAIN IN THE WOODS

The locust harsh, that sharply saws  
    The silence of the summer noon;  
The katydid, that thinly draws  
    Its fine file o'er the bars of moon;  
And grasshopper that drills each pause:  
  
The mantis, long-clawed, furtive, lean —  
    Fierce feline of the insect hordes —  
And dragonfly, gauze-winged and green,  
    Beneath the wild-grape's leaves and gourd's,  
Have housed themselves and rest unseen.

The butterfly and forest-bird  
    Are huddled on the same gnarled bough,  
From which, like some rain-voweled word  
    That dampness hoarsely utters now,  
The tree-toad's guttural voice is heard.

I crouch and listen: and again  
    The woods are filled with phantom forms —  
With shapes, grotesque in cloudy train,  
    That rise and reach to me cool arms  
Of mist: dim, wandering wraiths of rain.

I see them come; fantastic, fair;  
    Chill, mushroom-colored: sky and earth  
Grow ghostly with their floating hair  
    And trailing limbs, that have their birth  
In wetness — fungi of the air.

## RAIN IN THE WOODS

O wraiths of rain! O ghosts of mist!

Still fold me, hold me, and pursue!

Still let my lips by yours be kissed!

Still draw me with your hands of dew

Unto the tryst, the dripping tryst.

# AN ALLEGORY

## WILDELL STATE

### HEAT

#### I

Now is it as if Spring had never been,  
And Winter but a memory and a dream,  
Here where the Summer stands, her lap of green  
Heaped high with bloom and beam,  
Among her blackberry-lilies, low that lean  
To kiss her feet; or, freckle-browed, that stare  
Upon the dragonfly which, slimly seen,  
Like a blue jewel flickering in her hair,  
Sparkles above them there.

#### II

Knee-deep among the tepid pools the cows  
Chew a slow cud or switch a slower tail,  
Half-sunk in sleep beneath the beechen boughs,  
Where thin the wood-gnats ail.  
From bloom to bloom the languid butterflies  
drowse;  
The sleepy bees make hardly any sound;

## HEAT

The only things the sun-rays can arouse,  
It seems, are two black beetles rolling round  
Upon the dusty ground.

## III

Within its channel glares the creek and shrinks,  
Beneath whose rocks the furtive crawfish hides  
In stagnant places, where the green frog blinks,  
And water-strider glides.  
Far hotter seems it for the bird that drinks,  
The startled kingfisher that screams and flies;  
Hotter and lonelier for the purples and pinks  
Of weeds that bloom, whose sultry perfumes  
rise  
Stifling the swooning skies.

## IV

From ragweed fallows, rye-fields, heaped with  
sheaves,  
From blistering rocks, no moss or lichens crust,  
And from the road, where every hoof-stroke  
heaves  
A cloud of burning dust,  
The hotness quivers, making limp the leaves,  
That loll like panting tongues. The pulsing  
heat

## HEAT

Seems a wan wimple that the Summer weaves,  
A veil, in which she wraps,—as in a sheet,—  
The shriveling corn and wheat.

## V

Furious, incessant in the weeds and briers  
The sawing weed bugs sing: and, heat-begot,  
The grasshoppers, so many strident wires,  
Staccato stinging hot:  
A lash of whirling sound that never tires,  
The locust flails the noon, where harnessed  
Thirst,  
Beside the road-spring, many a shod hoof mires,  
Into the trough thrusts his hot head; immersed,  
Round which cool bubbles burst.

## VI

The sad, sweet voice of some wood-spirit who  
Laments while watching a loved oak-tree die,  
From the deep forest comes the wood-dove's coo,  
A long, lost, lonely cry.—  
Oh, for a breeze! a mighty wind to woo  
The woods to stormy laughter; sow like grain  
The world with freshness of invisible dew,  
And pile above far, fevered hill and plain  
Cloud-bastions, black with rain.

## YOUNG SEPTEMBER

### I

With a look and a laugh where the stream was  
flowing,

September led me along the land;  
Where the goldenrod and lobelia, glowing,  
Seemed burning torches within her hand.  
And faint as the thistle's or milkweed's feather  
I glimpsed her form in the sparkling weather.

### II

Now 'twas her hand and now her hair  
That tossed me welcome everywhere;  
That lured me onward through the stately rooms  
Of forest, hung and carpeted with glooms,  
And windowed wide with azure, doored with  
green,  
Through which rich glimmers of her robe were  
seen —  
Now, like some deep marsh-mallow, rosy-gold;

## YOUNG SEPTEMBER

Now, like the great Joe-Pye-weed, fold on fold  
Of heavy mauve; and now, like the intense  
Massed ironweed, a purple opulence.

### III

Along the bank in a wild procession  
Of gold and sapphire the blossoms blew;  
And borne on the breeze came their soft con-  
fession  
In syllabled musk and honey-dew;  
In words unheard that their lips kept saying,  
Sweet as the lips of children praying.

### IV

And so, meseemed, I heard them tell  
How here her loving glance once fell  
Upon this bank, and from its azure grew  
The ageratum mist-flower's happy hue;  
How from her kiss, as crimson as the dawn,  
The cardinal-flow'r drew its vermillion;  
And from her hair's blond touch th' elecampane  
Evolved the glory of its golden rain;  
While from her starry footsteps, redolent,  
The aster pearléd its flowery firmament.

## THE VINTAGER

Among the fragrant grapes she bows;  
Long violet clusters heap her hands:  
And, with bright brows, on him bestows  
Sweet looks, like soft commands.

And from her sunburnt throat, at times,  
As bubbles burst on new-made wine,  
A happy fit of merry rhymes  
Rings down the hills of vine.

And in his heart, remorseless, sweet,  
Grew big the red-grape, passion, there;  
His heart, that, ever at her feet,  
Was filled with love's despair.

But she, who ne'er the honeyed must  
Of love had drained, a grown-up child,  
Saw in him — merely one to trust,  
And broke his heart, and smiled.

## BLACK VESPER'S PAGEANTS

The day, all fierce with carmine, turns  
An Indian face towards Earth and dies ;  
The west, like some gaunt vase, inurns  
Its ashes under smoldering skies ;  
Athwart whose bowl one red cloud streams,  
Wild as some dream an Aztec dreams.

Now shadows mass above the world,  
And night comes on with wind and rain ;  
The mulberry-colored leaves are hurled  
Like frantic hands against the pane.  
And through the forests, bending low,  
Night stalks like some gigantic Woe.

In hollows where the thistle shakes  
A hoar bloom like a witch's light,  
From weed and flower the rain-wind rakes  
Dead sweetness — as a wildman might,  
From autumn leaves, the woods among,  
Dig some dead woman, fair and young.

## BLACK VESPER'S PAGEANTS

Now let me walk the woodland ways,  
Alone! except for thoughts, that are  
Akin to such wild nights and days—  
    A portion of the storm that far  
Fills Heaven and Earth tumultuously,  
And my own soul with ecstasy.

## A TWILIGHT MOTH

Dusk is thy dawn; when Eve puts on her state  
    Of gold and purple in the marbled west,  
Thou comest forth like some embodied trait,  
    Or dim conceit, a lily-bud confessed;  
Or, of a rose, the visible wish; that, white,  
Goes softly messengering through the night,  
    Whom each expectant flower makes its guest.

All day the primroses have thought of thee,  
    Their golden heads close-haremed from the  
heat;  
All day the mystic moonflowers silkenly  
    Veiled snowy faces,— that no bee might greet  
Or butterfly that, weighed with pollen, passed;—  
Keeping Sultana-charms for thee, at last,  
    Their lord, who comest to salute each sweet.

Cool-throated flowers that avoid the day's  
    Too fervid kisses; every bud that drinks  
The tipsy dew and to the starlight plays  
    Nocturnes of fragrance, thy wing'd shadow  
links

### A TWILIGHT MOTH

In bonds of secret brotherhood and faith;  
O bearer of their order's shibboleth,  
Like some pale symbol fluttering o'er these  
pinks.

What dost thou whisper in the balsam's ear  
That sets it blushing, or the hollyhock's,—  
A syllabled silence that no man may hear,—  
As dreamily upon its stem it rocks?  
What spell dost bear from listening plant to  
plant,  
Like some white witch, some ghostly ministrant,  
Some spectre of some perished flower of  
phlox?

O voyager of that universe which lies  
Between the four walls of this garden fair,—  
Whose constellations are the fireflies  
That wheel their instant courses everywhere,—  
'Mid fairy firmaments wherein one sees  
Mimic Boötes and the Pleiades,  
Thou steerest like some fairy ship-of-air.

Gnome-wrought of moonbeam-fluff and gos-  
samer,  
Silent as scent, perhaps thou chariotest

A TWILIGHT MOTH

Mab or King Oberon; or, haply, her  
His queen, Titania, on some midnight quest.—  
Oh for the herb, the magic euphrasy,  
That should unmask thee to mine eyes, ah me!  
And all that world at which my soul hath  
guessed!

## THE GRASSHOPPER

### I

What joy you take in making hotness hotter,  
In emphasizing dullness with your buzz,  
Making monotony more monotonous!  
When summer comes, and drouth hath dried the  
water  
In all the creeks, we hear your ragged rasp  
Filing the stillness. Or,—as urchins beat  
A stagnant pond whereon the bubbles gasp,—  
Your switch-like music whips the midday heat.  
O burr of sound caught in the Summer's hair,  
We hear you everywhere.

### II

We hear you in the vines and berry-brambles,  
Along the unkempt lanes, among the weeds,  
Amid the shadeless meadows, gray with seeds,  
And by the wood, round which the rail-fence  
rambles,

## THE GRASSHOPPER

Sawing the sunlight with your sultry saw.  
Or,— like to tomboy truants, at their play  
With noisy mirth among the barn's deep straw,—  
    You sing away the careless summer-day.  
O brier-like voice that clings in idleness  
    To Summer's drowsy dress.

## III

You tramp of insects, vagrant and unheeding,  
    Improvident, who of the summer make  
One long green meal-time, and for winter take  
No care, aye singing or just merely feeding!  
Happy-go-lucky vagabond,— though frost  
    Shall pierce, ere long, your coat of green or  
brown,  
And pinch your body,— let no song be lost,  
    But as you lived, into your grave go down —  
Like some small poet with his little rhyme,  
    Forgotten of all time.

## FOREST AND FIELD

### I

Green, watery jets of light let through  
The rippling foliage drenched with dew;  
And golden glimmers, warm and dim,  
That in the vistaed distance swim;  
Where, round the wood-spring's oozy urn,  
The limp, loose fronds of forest fern  
Trail like the tresses, green and wet,  
A wood-nymph binds with violet.  
O'er rocks that bulge and roots that knot  
The emerald-amber mosses clot;  
From matted walls of brier and brush  
The elder nods its plumes of plush;  
And, Argus-eyed with bloom on bloom,  
The wild-rose breathes its wild perfume;  
May-apples, ripening yellow, lean  
With oblong fruit, a lemon-green,  
Near Indian-turnips, long of stem,  
That bear an acorn-oval gem,  
As if some woodland Bacchus there,—  
While braiding locks of hyacinth hair

## FOREST AND FIELD

With ivy-tod,— had idly tossed  
His thyrsus down and so had lost:  
And blood-root, that from scarlet wombs  
Puts forth, in spring, its milk-white blooms,  
That then like starry footsteps shine  
Of April under beech and pine;  
At which the gnarléd eyes of trees  
Stare, big as Fauns', at Dryadës,  
That bend above a fountain's spar,  
As white and naked as a star.

The stagnant stream flows sleepily  
Thick-paved with lily-pads; the bee,—  
Brown, honey-drunk, a Bassarid,—  
Booms past the mottled toad, that, hid  
In calamus and blue-eyed grass,  
Beside the water's pooling glass,  
Silenus-like, eyes stolidly  
The Mænad-glittering dragonfly.  
And pennyroyal and peppermint  
Pour dry-hot odors without stint  
From fields and banks of many streams;  
And in their scent one almost seems  
To see Demeter pass, her breath  
Sweet with her triumph over death.—  
A haze of floating saffron; sound  
Of shy, crisp creepings o'er the ground;

## FOREST AND FIELD

The dip and stir of twig and leaf;  
Tempestuous gusts of spices brief  
Borne over bosks of sassafras  
By winds that foot it on the grass;  
Sharp, sudden songs and whisperings,  
That hint at untold, hidden things —  
Pan and Sylvanus who of old  
Kept sacred each wild wood and wold.  
A wily light beneath the trees  
Quivers and dusks with every breeze —  
A Hamadryad, haply, who, —  
Culling her morning meal of dew  
From frail, accustomed cups of flowers, —  
Now sees some Satyr in the bowers,  
Or hears his goat-hoof snapping press  
A brittle branch, and in distress  
Shrinks back; her dark, dishevelled hair  
Veiling her limbs one instant there.

## II

Down precipices of the dawn  
The rivers of the day are drawn,  
The soundless torrents, free and far,  
Of gold that deluge every star.  
There is a sound of winds and wings  
That fills the woods with carollings;

## FOREST AND FIELD

And, dashed on moss and flower and fern,  
And leaves, that quiver, breathe and burn,  
Rose-radiance smites the solitudes,  
The dew-drenched hills, the dripping woods  
That twitter as with canticles  
Of bird and brook; and air that smells  
Of flowers, and buds, and boisterous bees,  
Delirious honey and wet trees.—  
Through briers that trip them, one by one,  
With swinging pails, that flash the sun,  
A troop of girls comes — berriers,  
Whose bare feet glitter where they pass  
Through dewdrop-trembling tufts of grass.  
And, oh! their laughter and their cheers  
Wake Echo on her shrubby rocks  
Who, answering, from her mountain mocks  
With rapid fairy horns — as if  
Each mossy vale and weedy cliff  
Had its imperial Oberon,  
Who, seeking his Titania, hid  
In coverts caverned from the sun,  
In kingly wrath had called and chid.

Cloud-feathers, oozing orange light,  
Make rich the Indian locks of Night;  
Her dusky waist with sultry gold  
Girdled and buckled fold on fold.

## FOREST AND FIELD

One star. A sound of bleating flocks.  
Great shadows stretched along the rocks,  
Like giant curses overthrown  
By some Arthurian champion.  
Soft-swimming sorceries of mist  
That streak blue glens with amethyst.  
And, tinkling in the clover dells,  
The twilight sound of cattle-bells.  
And where the marsh in reed and grass  
Burns, angry as a shattered glass,  
The flies blur sudden gold, and shine  
Like drops of amber-scattered wine  
Spun high by reeling Bacchanals,  
When Bacchus wreathes his curling hair  
With vine-leaves, and from every lair  
His worshippers around him calls.  
They come, they come, a happy throng,  
The berriers with lilt and song;  
Their pails brimmed black to tin-bright eaves  
With luscious fruit, kept cool with leaves  
Of aromatic sassafras;  
'Twixt which a berry often slips,  
Like laughter, from the purple mass,  
Wine-swollen as Silenus' lips.

## FOREST AND FIELD

### III

The tanned and tired Noon climbs high  
Up burning reaches of the sky ;  
Below the drowsy belts of pines  
The rock-ledged river leaps and shines ;  
And over rainless hill and dell  
Is blown the harvest's sultry smell :  
While, in the fields, one sees and hears  
The brawny-throated harvesters,—  
Their red brows beaded with the heat,—  
By twos and threes among the wheat  
Flash their hot scythes ; behind them press  
The binders — men and maids who sing  
Like some mad troop of piping Pan ;—  
While all the hillsides, echoing, ring  
Such sounds of Ariel airiness  
As haunted freckled Caliban.

“ O ho ! O ho ! 't is noon I say.  
The roses blow.  
Away, away, above the hay,  
To the song o' the bees the roses sway ;  
The love-lays that they hum all day,  
So low ! so low !  
The roses' Minnesingers they.”

## FOREST AND FIELD

Up velvet lawns of lilac skies  
The tawny moon begins to rise  
Behind low, blue-black hills of trees,—  
As rises up, in siren seas,  
To rock in purple deeps, hip-hid,  
A virgin-bosomed Oceanid.—  
Gaunt shadows crouch by tree and scaur,  
Dusk's shaggy Satyrs waiting for  
The Nymphs of moon, the Dryads white,  
Who take with loveliness the night,  
And glorify it with their love.  
The sweet, far notes I hear, I hear,  
Beyond dim pines and mellow ways;  
The song of some fair harvester,  
The lovely Limnad of the grove,  
Whose singing charms me while it slays.

“O deep! O deep! the earth and air  
Are sunk in sleep.  
Adieu to care! Now everywhere  
Is rest; and by the old oak there  
The maiden with the nut-brown hair  
Doth keep, doth keep  
Tryst with her lover the young and fair.”

## FOREST AND FIELD

### IV

Like Atalanta's spheres of gold,  
Within the orchard, apples rolled  
From sudden hands of boughs that lay  
Their leaves, like palms, against the day;  
And near them pears of rusty brown  
Rolled bruised; and peaches, pink with down,  
And fury as the ears of Pan;  
Or, like Diana's cheeks, a tan  
Beneath which burnt a tender fire;  
Or wan as Psyche's with desire.  
And down the orchard vistas,— young,  
A hickory basket by him swung,  
A hat of straw against the sun  
Drawn shadowy o'er his face,— he strode;  
As if he looked to find some one,  
His eyes searched every bend of road.  
Before him, like a living burr,  
Rattled the noisy grasshopper.  
And where the cows' melodious bells  
Trailed music up and down the dells,  
Beside the spring, that o'er the ground  
Went whimpering like a fretful hound,  
He saw her waiting, fair and slim,  
Her pail forgotten there, for him.

## FOREST AND FIELD

Yellow as sunset skies and pale  
As fairy clouds that stay or sail  
Through azure vaults of summer, blue  
As summer heavens, the wildflowers grew;  
And blossoms on which spurts of light  
Fell laughing — like the lips one might  
Feign once were Hebe's, or a girl's  
That laughter lights with rows of pearls.  
Long ferns, in murmuring masses heaped;  
And mosses moist, in beryl steeped  
And musk aromas of the wood  
And silence of the solitude:  
And everything that near her blew  
The spring had showered thick with dew.—  
Across the rambling fence she leaned,  
Her fresh, round arms all white and bare;  
Her artless beauty, bonnet-screened,  
Simplicity from feet to hair.  
A wood-thrush gurgled in a vine —  
Ah! 't is his step, 't is he she hears;  
The wild-rose smelt like some rare wine —  
He comes, ah, yes! 't is he who nears.  
And her brown eyes and happy face  
Said welcome. And with rustic grace  
He leant beside her; and they had  
Some talk with youthful laughter glad:  
I know not what: I know but this —  
Its final period was a kiss.

## SUMMER

### I

Hang out your loveliest star, O Night! O Night!  
Your richest rose, O Dawn!  
To greet sweet Summer, her, who, clothed in  
light,  
Leads Earth's best hours on.  
Hark! how the wild birds of the woods  
Throat it within the dewy solitudes!  
The brook sings low and soft,  
The trees make song,  
As, from her heaven aloft,  
Comes blue-eyed Summer like a girl along.

### II

And as the Day, her lover, leads her in,  
How bright his beauty glows!  
How red his lips, that ever try to win  
Her mouth's delicious rose!  
And from the beating of his heart

## SUMMER

Warm winds arise and sighing thence depart:  
And from his eyes and hair  
The light and dew  
Fall round her everywhere,  
And heaven above her is an arch of blue.

## III

Come to the forest, or the treeless meadows  
Deep with their hay or grain;  
Come where the hills lift high their thrones of  
shadows,  
And tawny orchards reign.  
Come where the reapers whet the scythe;  
Where golden sheaves are heaped; where ber-  
riers blithe,  
With willow-basket and with pail,  
Swarm knoll and plain;  
Where flowers freckle every vale,  
And Beauty goes with hands of berry-stain.

## IV

Come where the dragonflies, a brassy blue,  
Flit round the wildwood streams,  
And, sucking at some horn of honey-dew,  
The wild-bee hums and dreams.

## SUMMER

Come where the butterfly waves wings of sleep,  
Gold-disked and mottled, over blossoms deep:  
    Come where beneath the rustic bridge  
        The creek-frog cries;  
    Or in the shade the rainbowed midge,  
Above the emerald pools, with murmurings flies.

## V

Come where the cattle browse within the brake,  
    As red as oak and strong;  
Where cattle-bells the echoes faintly wake,  
    And milkmaids sing their song.  
Come where the vine-trailed rocks, with waters  
    hoary,  
Tell to the sun some legend old or story;  
    Or where the sunset to the land  
        Speaks words of gold;  
    Where Ripeness walks, a wheaten band  
About her brow, making the buds unfold.

## VI

Come where the woods lift up their stalwart  
    arms  
    Unto the star-sown skies;  
Knotted and gnarled, that to the winds and  
    storms

## SUMMER

Fling mighty rhapsodies:  
Or to the moon repeat what they have seen,  
When Night upon their shoulders vast doth lean.  
Come where the dew's clear syllable  
Slips from the rose;  
And where the fireflies fill  
The dark with golden music of their glows.

## VII

Now while the dingles and the vine-roofed glens  
Whisper their flowery tale  
Unto the silence; and the lakes and fens  
Unto the moonlight pale  
Murmur their rapture, let us seek her out,  
Her of the honey throat and peach-sweet pout,  
Summer! and at her feet,  
The love of old  
Lay like a sheaf of wheat,  
And of our hearts the purest gold of gold.

## INDIAN SUMMER

The dawn is a warp of fever,  
The eve is a woof of fire;  
And the month is a singing weaver  
Weaving a red desire.

With stars Dawn dices with Even  
For the rosy gold they heap  
On the blue of the day's broad heaven,  
On the black of the night's wide deep.

It 's—"Reins to the blood!" and "Marry!"  
The Season 's a prince who burns  
With the teasing lusts that harry  
His heart for a wench who spurns.

It 's—"Crown us a beaker with sherry,  
To drink to the doxy's heels;  
A tankard of wine o' the berry,  
To lips like a cloven peel's.

## INDIAN SUMMER

“ ‘S death! if a king be saddened,  
Right so let a fool laugh lies:  
But wine! when a king is gladdened,  
And a woman’s waist and her eyes.”

He hath shattered the loom of the weaver,  
And left but a leaf that flits,  
He hath seized heaven’s gold, and a fever  
Of mist and of frost is its.

He hath tipped the buxom beauty,  
And gotten her hug and her kiss —  
The wide world ’s royal booty  
To pile at her feet for this.

## TO · SORROW.

### I

O dark-eyed spirit of the marble brow,  
Whose look is silence and whose touch is  
night,  
Who walkest lonely through the world, O thou,  
Who sittest lonely with Life's blown-out light;  
Who in the hollow hours of night's noon  
Criest like some lost child;  
Whose anguish-fevered eyeballs seek the moon  
To cool their pulses wild.  
Thou who dost bend to kiss Joy's sister cheek,  
Turning its rose to alabaster; yea,  
Thou who art terrible and mad and meek,  
Why in my heart art thou enshrined to-day?  
Sorrow, O say! O say!

### II

Now Spring is here and all the world is white,  
I will go forth, and where the forest robes  
Itself in green, and every hill and height

## TO SORROW

Crowns its fair head with blossoms,— spirit  
gloves  
Of hyacinth and crocus dashed with dew,—  
I will forget my grief,  
And thee, O Sorrow, gazing at the blue,  
Beneath a last year's leaf,  
Of some brief violet the south-wind woos,  
Or bluet, whence the west-wind raked the  
snow ;  
The baby eyes of love, the darling hues  
Of happiness, that thou canst never know,  
Mother of pain and woe.

## III

On some hoar upland, hoar with clustered  
thorns,  
Hard by a river's windy white of waves,  
I shall sit down with Spring,— whose eyes are  
morns  
Of light; whose cheeks the rose of health  
enslaves,—  
And so forget thee, braiding in Spring's hair  
The snowdrop, tipped with green,  
The cool-eyed primrose and the trillium fair,  
And moony celandine.  
Contented so to lie within her arms,

## TO SORROW

Forgetting all the sere and sad and wan,  
Remembering Love alone, who, o'er earth's  
storms,  
High on the mountains of perpetual dawn,  
Leads the glad Hours on.

## IV

Or in the peace that follows storm, when Even,  
Within the west, stands dreaming, lone and  
far,  
Clad on with green and silver, and the Heaven  
Is brightly brooched with one gold-glittering  
star,  
I will lie down beside a mountain lake,  
Round which the tall pines sigh,  
And, breathing musk of rain from boughs that  
shake  
Storm balsam, blowing by,  
Make friends of Dream and Contemplation high,  
And Music, listening to the mocking-bird,—  
Who through the hush sends its melodious cry,—  
And so forget a while that other word,  
That all loved things must die.

## NIGHT

Out of the East, as from an unknown shore,  
Thou comest with thy children in thine arms,—  
Slumber and Dream,— whom mortals so adore,—  
Their flowing raiment sculptured to their  
charms:  
Soft on thy breast thy lovely children rest,  
Laid like two roses in one balmy nest.  
Silent thou comest, swiftly too and slow.  
There is no other presence like to thine,  
When thou approachest with thy babes divine,  
Thy shadowy face above them bending low,  
Blowing the ringlets from their brows of snow.

Oft have I taken Sleep from thy dark arms,  
And fondled her fair head, with poppies  
wreathed,  
Within my bosom's depths, until its storms  
With her were hushed and I but faintly  
breathed:  
And then her sister, Dream, with frolic art

## NIGHT

Arose from rest, and in my sleeping heart  
    Blew bubbles of dreams where elfin worlds  
        were lost;  
Worlds where my stranger soul looked down at  
    me,  
Or walked with spirits by a rainbowed sea,  
    Or smiled, an unfamiliar shape of frost,  
        Floating on gales of breathless melody.

Day comes to us in garish glory garbed;  
    But thou, thou bringest to the tired heart  
        Rest and sweet silence, wherein are absorbed  
            All the vain tumults of the mind and mart.  
Whether thou comest with hands full of stars,  
    Or clothed in storm and cloud, the lightning bars,  
        Rolling the thunder like a mighty dress,  
God moves with thee; we seem to hear His feet,  
    Wind-like, along the floors of Heaven beat;  
        To see His face, revealed in awfulness,  
    Through thee, O Night, to ban us or to bless.

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE

### I

The shadows sit and stand about its door  
Like uninvited guests and poor;  
And all the long, hot summer day  
The ceaseless locust dins its roundelay  
In one old sycamore.  
The squirrel leaves upon its rotting roof  
Its wandering tracks  
In empty hulls; and in its clapboard cracks  
The spider weaves a windy woof,  
And cells of clay the mud-wasp packs.  
The she-fox whelps upon its floor;  
And o'er its sun warped door  
The owlet roosts; and where the mosses run,  
The freckled snake basks in the sun.

### II

The children of what fathers sleep  
Beneath those melancholy pines?

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE

The slow slugs slime their headstones there  
    where creep  
    The doddered poison-vines.  
The orchard, near the meadow deep,  
    Lifts up decrepit arms,  
    Black-lichened in a withering heap.  
No sap swells up to make it leap  
    And shout against spring's storms;  
No blossom lulls its age asleep;  
    The winds bring sad alarms.  
Big, bell-round pears and pippins, russet-red,  
    No maiden gathers now;  
The worm-bored trunks weep tears of gum  
    instead,  
Oozing from each old bough.

## III

The woodlands around it are solitary  
    And fold it like gaunt hands;  
The sunlight is sad and the moonlight is  
    dreary,  
The hum of the country is lonesome and  
    weary,  
    And the bees go by in bands  
    To gladder and lovelier lands.  
The grasses are rotting in walk and in bower;

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE

The loneliness,— dank and rank  
As a chamber where lies for a lonely hour  
An old-man's corpse with many a flower,—  
    Is hushed and blank.  
And even the birds have passed it by,  
Gone with their songs to a happier sky,  
    A happier sky and bank.

## IV

In its desolate halls are lying,  
    Gold, blood-red, and browned,  
Drifted leaves of autumn dying;  
And the winds, above them sighing,  
    Turn them round and round,  
    Make a ghostly sound  
As of footsteps falling, flying,  
    Ghostly footsteps, faintly flying  
    Through the haunted house.

## V.

Gazing down in her white shroud,  
    Wov'n of windy cloud,  
Comes at night the phantom moon;  
Comes, and all the shadows soon,  
    Crowding chambers of the house,  
    Haunting whispering rooms, arouse;—

### THE HAUNTED HOUSE

Shadows, ghosts, her rays lead on,  
Till beneath the cloud  
Like a ghost she 's gone,  
In her gusty shroud,  
O'er the haunted house.

## AUTUMN

I oft have met her slowly wandering  
Beside a leafy stream, her locks blown wild,  
Her cheeks a hectic flush, more fair than Spring,  
As if on her the scarlet copse had smiled.  
Or I have seen her sitting, dark and tall,—  
Her gentle eyes with foolish weeping dim,—  
Beneath a twisted oak from whose red leaves  
She wound great drowsy wreaths and let them  
fall;  
The west-wind in her hair, that made it swim  
Far out behind, brown as the rustling  
sheaves.

Or in the hill-lands I have often seen  
The marvel of her passage; glimpses faint  
Of glimmering woods that glanced the hills be-  
tween,  
Like Indian faces, fierce with forest paint.  
Or I have met her 'twixt two beechen hills,  
Within a dingled valley near a fall,

## AUTUMN

Held in her nut-brown hand one cardinal flower;

Or wading dimly where the leaf-dammed rills Went babbling through the wildwood's arrased hall,

Where burned the beech and maples glared their power.

Or I have met her by a ruined mill,

Where trailed the crimson creeper, serpentine, On fallen leaves that stirred and rustled, chill, And watched her swinging in the wildgrape-vine.

While Beauty, sad among the vales and mountains,

More sad than death, or all that death can teach,

Dreamed of decay and stretched appealing arms,

Where splashed the murmur of the forest's fountains:

With all her loveliness did she beseech, And all the sorrow of her wildwood charms.

Once only in a hollow, girt with trees,

A-dream amid wild asters filled with rain,

I glimpsed her cheeks, red-berried by the breeze, In her dark eyes the night's sidereal stain.

## AUTUMN

And once upon an orchard's tangled path,  
Where all the goldenrod had turned to brown,  
Where russets rolled and leaves lay sweet of  
breath,  
I did behold her 'mid her aftermath  
Of blossoms standing, in her gypsy gown,  
Within her gaze the dreams of life and  
death.

## ALONG THE OHIO

Athwart a sky of brass long welts of gold;  
A river of flame the wide Ohio lies;  
Beneath the sunset, billowing manifold,  
The dark-blue hill-tops rise.

And, westering, dips the crescent of the moon  
Through great cloud-feathers, flushed with  
rosy ray,  
That close around the crystal of her lune  
The redbird wings of Day.

A little skiff slips o'er the burnished stream;  
A wake of flame, that broadens far behind,  
Follows in ripples; and the paddles gleam  
Against the evening wind.

Was it the boat, the solitude, and hush,  
That with dead Indians peopled all the glooms?  
That made each bank, meseemed, and every bush,  
Start into eagle-plumes?

## ALONG THE OHIO

That made me seem to hear the breaking brush,  
And, as the stag's great antlers swelled in view,  
To hear the arrow twang from cane and rush,  
That dipped to the canoe?

To see the glimmering wigwams by the waves?  
And, wildly clad, around the camp-fires' glow,  
The Shawnee chieftains with their painted  
braves,  
Each with his battle-bow? . . .

But now the vision like the sunset fades,  
The clouds of ribbéd gold have oozed their  
light;  
And from the west, like sombre sachem shades,  
Gallop the shades of night.

The broad Ohio glitters to the stars;  
And many murmurs wander through its  
woods—  
Is it the mourning of dead warriors  
For their lost solitudes?

The moon is set; but, like another moon,  
The crescent of the river shimmers there,  
Unchanged as when the eyes of Daniel Boone  
Beheld it flowing fair.

## THE OLD INN

Red-winding from the sleepy town,  
One takes the lone, forgotten lane  
Straight through the hills. A brush-bird brown  
Bubbles in thorn-flowers sweet with rain,  
Where breezes bend the gleaming grain  
And cautious drip of higher leaves  
The lower dips that drip again,  
Above the tangled trees it heaves  
Its gables and its haunted eaves.

One creeper, gnarled and blossomless,  
O'erforests all its eastern wall;  
The sighing cedars rake and press  
Dark boughs along the panes they sprawl;  
While, where the sun beats, drone and drawl  
The mud-wasps; and one bushy bee,  
Gold-dusty, hurls along the hall  
To crowd into a crack.—To me  
The shadows seem too scared to flee.

## THE OLD INN

Of ragged chimneys martins make  
Huge pipes of music; twittering, here  
They build and brood.— My footfalls wake  
Strange stealing echoes, till I fear  
I 'll see my pale self drawing near,  
My phantom self as in a glass;  
Or one, men murdered, buried — where?—  
Dim in gray, stealthy glimmer, pass  
With lips that seem to moan “ Alas ! ”

## THE MILL-WATER

The water-flag and wild cane grow  
Round banks whereon the sunbeams sow  
Ephemeral gold when, on its shores,  
The wind sighs through the sycamores.

In one green angle, just in reach,  
Between a willow-tree and beech,  
Moss-grown and leaky lies a boat  
The thick-grown lilies keep afloat.

And through its waters, half-awake,  
Slow swims the spotted water-snake;  
And near its edge, like some gray streak,  
Stands gaunt the still fly-up-the-creek.

Between the lily-pads and blooms  
The water-spirits set their looms,  
And weave the lace-like light that dims  
The glimmering leaves of under limbs.

Each lily is the hiding-place  
Of some dim wood-thing's elvish face,

## THE MILL-WATER

That watches you with gold-green eyes  
Where bubbles of its breathing rise.

I fancy, when the waxing moon  
Leans through the trees and dreams of June;  
And when the black bat slants its wing,  
And lonelier the green-frogs sing;

I fancy, when the whippoorwill  
In some old tree sings wildly shrill,  
With glow-worm eyes that dot the dark,—  
Each holding high a firefly spark,

To torch its way,— the wood-imps come:  
And some float rocking here; and some  
Unmoor the lily-leaves and oar  
Around the old boat by the shore.

They climb through oozy weeds and moss;  
They swarm its rotting sides and toss  
Their firefly torches o'er its edge  
Or hang them in the tangled sedge.

The boat is loosed. The moon is pale.  
Around the dam they slowly sail.  
Upon its bow, to pilot it,  
A jack-o'-lantern flame doth sit.

### THE MILL-WATER

Yes; I have seen it all in dreams:  
Naught is forgotten — naught, it seems —  
The strangled face, the matted hair,  
Drown'd, of the woman trailing there.

## THE DREAM

Thus did I dream:

It seemed the afternoon  
Of some deep, tropic day; and yet the moon  
Hung, round and bright with golden alchemy,  
High in a heaven sapphire as the sea.  
Long, lawny lengths of perishable cloud  
Templed the west, o'er rolling forests bowed;  
Clouds raining colors, gold and violet,  
That, opening, seemed from inner worlds to let  
Down hints of Parian beauty and lost charms  
Of old romance, peopled with fairy forms.  
And all about me fruited orchards grew,  
Pear, quince, and peach, and plums of dusty  
blue;  
Rose-apricots, and apples streaked with fire,  
Kissed into ripeness by some sun's desire,  
And big with juice. And on far, fading hills,  
Down which it seemed a hundred torrent rills  
Flashed silent silver, vines and vines and vines  
Terraced the world with vintage, cooling wines,

## THE DREAM

Pleasant and fragrant as the heart of June,  
Their delicate tang drawn from the wine-white  
moon.

And from the clouds o'er this sweet world there  
dripped

An odorous music, strange and feverish-lipped,  
That swung and swooned and panted as with  
sighs;

Investing at each throb the air with eyes  
And forms of sensuous spirits, limpid white,  
Clad on with raiment as of starry night;  
Fair, frail embodiments of melody,  
From out whose hearts of crystal one could see  
The music stream like light through delicate  
hands

Hollowing a lamp. And as on sounding sands  
The ocean murmur haunts the rosy shells,—  
Within whose convolutions beauty dwells,—  
My soul became a harp of vibrant love  
Reëchoing all the harmony above.

## SPRING TWILIGHT

The sun set late; and left along the west  
A furious ruby; o'er which billowy snows  
Of clouds unrolled; each cloud a mighty breast  
Blooming with almond-rose.

The sun set late; and wafts of wind beat down,  
And cuffed the blossoms from the blossoming  
quince;  
Scattered the petals of the poppy's crown,  
And made the clover wince.

By dusking forests, through whose fretful  
boughs  
In flying fragments shot the evening's flame,  
Adown the tangled lane the quiet cows  
With dreamy tinklings came.

The sun set late; but scarcely had he gone  
When o'er the moon's gold-litten crescent  
there,  
Bright Phosphor, polished as a precious stone,  
Burned in fair deeps of air.

### SPRING TWILIGHT

As from faint stars the glory waned and waned,  
The crickets made the old-time garden shrill;  
Beyond the luminous pasture-lands complained  
The first far whippoorwill.

## A SLEET-STORM IN MAY

On southern winds shot through with amber light,  
Breathing soft balm and clothed in cloudy white,  
The lily-fingered Spring came o'er the hills,  
Waking the crocus and the daffodils.  
O'er the cold Earth she breathed a tender sigh —  
The maples sang and flung their banners high,  
Their crimson tasselled pennons, and the elm  
Bound his dark brows with a green-crested helm.  
Beneath the musky rot of last year's leaves,  
Under the forest's myriad naked eaves,  
Life woke and rose in gold and green and blue,  
Robed in the starlight of the twinkling dew.  
With timid tread adown the barren wood  
Spring held her way, when, lo! before her stood  
White-mantled Winter nodding his white head,  
Stormy his brow and stormily he said:  
“ The God of Terror, and the King of Storm,  
Must I remind thee how my iron arm  
Raised rebel standards 'mid these conquered  
bowers,

## A SLEET-STORM IN MAY

Turning their green to crimson? — Thou, with  
flowers,  
*Thou* wouldst supplant me! nay! usurp my  
throne! —  
Audacious one!" —

And at her breast he tossed  
A glittering spear of ice and piercing frost,  
And struck her down, dead on th' unfeeling mold.  
The fragile blossoms, gathered in the fold  
Of her young bosom, fell in desolate rows  
About her beauty; and, like fragrant snows,  
Covered her lovely hands and beautiful feet,  
Or on her lips lay like last kisses sweet  
That died there. Lilacs, musky of the May,  
And bluer violets and snowdrops lay  
Entombed in crystal, icy faint and fair,  
Like teardrops scattered through her heavenly  
hair.

Alas! sad heart, break not beneath the pain!  
Time changeth all; the Beautiful wakes again.—  
We should not question such; a higher power  
Knows best what bud is ripest, or what flower,  
Silently plucks it at the fittest hour.

## THE HEART O' SPRING

Whiten, oh, whiten, O clouds of lawn!

Lily-like clouds that whiten above,  
Now like a dove, and now like a swan,  
But never, oh, never — pass on! pass on! —  
Never as white as the throat of my love.

Blue-black night on the mountain peaks —

Oh, not so black as the locks o' my love!  
Stars that shine through the evening's streaks  
Over the torrent that flashes and breaks,  
Brighter the eyes of my love, my love!

Moon in a cloud, as white as snow,

Mist in the vale where the rivulet bounds,  
Dropping from ledge to ledge below,  
Turning to gold in the sunset's glow,  
Softer and sweeter her footstep sounds.

Sound o' May winds in the blossoming trees,

Oh, not so sweet as her laugh that rings;  
Song o' wild birds on the morning breeze,  
Birds and brooks and murmur o' bees,  
Sweeter her voice when she laughs or sings.

## THE HEART O' SPRING

The rose o' my heart is she; my dawn!  
My star o' the east, my moon above!  
My soul takes ship for the Avalon  
Of her heart of hearts, and shall sail on  
Till it anchors safe in its haven of love.

## “A BROKEN RAINBOW ON THE SKIES OF MAY”

A broken rainbow on the skies of May,  
Touching the dripping roses and low clouds,  
And in wet clouds like scattered jewels lost:—  
So in the sorrow of her soul the ghost  
Of one great love, of iridescent ray,  
Spanning the roses gray of memory,  
Against the tumult of life’s rushing crowds—  
A broken rainbow on the skies of May.

A flashing humming-bird among the flowers,  
Deep-colored blooms; its slender tongue and bill  
Sucking the calyxed and the honeyed myrrhs,  
Till, sick of sweets, to other flow’rs it whirrs:—  
Such was his love that won her heart’s full  
bowers  
To yield to him their all, their sweets in showers,  
The flower from which he drank his body’s fill—  
A flashing humming-bird among the flowers.

## A BROKEN RAINBOW

A moon, moth-white, that through far mists,  
like fleece,

Moves amber-girt into a bulk of black,  
And, lost to sight, rims all the black with  
froth:—

A love that swept its moon, like some great  
moth,

Across the heaven of her soul's young peace;  
And, smoothly passing, in the clouds did cease  
Of time, through which its burning light comes  
back —

A moon, moth-white, that moves through mists  
like fleece.

A bolt of living thunder downward hurled,  
Momental blazing from the piled-up storm,  
That etches out the mountains and the ocean,  
The towering rocks, then blots the sight's com-  
motion:—

Love, love that swiftly coming bared the world,  
The deeps of life, round which fate's clouds are  
curled,

And, ceasing, left all night and black alarm —  
A bolt of living thunder downward hurled.

## ORGIE

On nights like this, when bayou and lagoon  
Swoon in the moonlight's mystic radiance,  
I seem to walk like one deep in a trance  
With old-world myths born of the mist and  
moon.

Lascivious eyes and mouths of sensual rose  
Smile into mine: and breasts of luring light,  
And tresses streaming golden to the night,  
Persuade me onward where the forest glows.

And then it seems along the haunted hills  
There falls a flutter as of beautiful feet,  
As if tempestuous troops of Mænads meet  
To drain deep bowls and shout and have their  
wills.

And then I feel her limbs will be revealed  
Like some great snow-white moth among the  
trees;  
Her vampire beauty, waiting there to seize  
And drag me downward where my doom is  
sealed.

## THE FARMSTEAD.

Yes, I love the Farmstead. There  
    In the spring the lilacs blew  
Plenteous perfume everywhere;  
    There in summer gladiolas drew  
Parallels of scarlet glare.

And the moon-hued primrose cool,  
    Satin-soft and redolent;  
Honeysuckles beautiful,  
    Filling all the air with scent;  
Roses red or white as wool.

Roses, glorious and lush,  
    Rich in tender-tinted dyes,  
Like the gay tempestuous rush  
    Of unnumbered butterflies,  
Clustering o'er each bending bush.

Here japonica and box,  
    And the wayward violets;  
Clumps of star-enameled phlox,  
    And the myriad flowery jets  
Of the twilight four-o'-clocks.

## THE FARMSTEAD

Ah, the beauty of the place!  
When the June made one great rose,  
Full of musk and mellow grace,  
In the garden's humming close,  
Of her comely mother face!

Bubble-like the hollyhocks  
Budded, burst, and flaunted wide  
Gypsy beauty from their stocks;  
Morning-glories, bubble-dyed,  
Swung in honey-hearted flocks.

Tawny tiger-lilies flung  
Doublets slashed with crimson on;  
Graceful slave-girls, fair and young,  
Like Circassians, in the sun  
Alabaster lilies swung.

Ah, the droning of the bee;  
In his dusty pantaloons  
Tumbling in the fleurs-de-lis;  
In the drowsy afternoons  
Dreaming in the pink sweet-pea.

Ah, the moaning wildwood dove!  
With its throat of amethyst

## THE FARMSTEAD

Rippled like a shining cove  
Which a wind to pearl hath kissed,  
Moaning, moaning of its love.

And the insects' gossip thin—  
From the summer hotness hid—  
In lone, leafy deeps of green;  
Then at eve the katydid  
With its hard, unvaried din.

Often from the whispering hills,  
Borne from out the golden dusk,—  
Gold with gold of daffodils,—  
Thrilled into the garden's musk  
The wild wail of whippoorwills.

From the purple-tangled trees,  
Like the white, full heart of night,  
Solemn with majestic peace,  
Swam the big moon, veined with light,  
Like some gorgeous golden-fleece.

She was there with me.—And who,  
In the magic of the hour,  
Had not sworn that they could view,  
Beading on each blade and flower  
Moony blisters of the dew?

## THE FARMSTEAD

And each fairy of our home,—  
    Firefly,—its taper lit  
In the honey-scented gloam,  
    Dashing down the dusk with it  
Like an instant-flaming foam.

And we heard the calling, calling,  
    Of the brown owl in the brake;  
Where the trumpet-vine hung, crawling  
    Down the ledge, into the lake  
Heard the sighing streamlet falling.

Then we wandered to the creek  
    Where the water-lilies, growing  
Thick as stars, lay white and weak;  
    Or against the brooklet's flowing  
Stooped and bathed a bashful cheek.

And the moonlight, rippling golden,  
    Fell in virgin aureoles  
On their bosoms, half-unfolden,  
    Where, it seemed, the fairies' souls  
Dreamed as perfume,—unbeholden;—

Lying sleeping, pearly-tented,  
    Baby-cribbed within each bud,

## THE FARMSTEAD

While the night-wind, pinewood-scented,  
Swooning over field and flood,  
Rocked them on the waters dented.

Then the low, melodious bell  
Of a sleeping heifer tinkled,  
In some berry-briered dell,  
As her satin dewlap wrinkled  
With the cud that made it swell.

And, returning home, we heard,  
In a beech-tree at the gate,  
Some brown, dream-behaunted bird,  
Singing of its absent mate,  
Of the mate that never heard.

And, you see, now I am gray,  
Why within the old, old place,  
With such memories, I stay:  
Fancy out her absent face  
Long since passed away.

She was mine — yes! still is mine:  
And my frosty memory  
Reels about her, as with wine  
Warmed into young eyes that see  
All the past that was divine.

### THE FARMSTEAD

Yes, I loved her, and have grown  
Melancholy in that love,  
And the memory alone  
Of her loveliness whereof  
She did sanctify each stone.

And where'er her flowers swing,  
There she walks,—as if a bee  
Fanned them with its airy wing,—  
Down her garden, shadowy  
In the hush the evenings bring.

## THE BOY COLUMBUS

And he had mused on lands each bird,—  
That winged from realms of Falerina,  
O'er seas of the Enchanted Sword,—  
In romance sang him, till he heard  
Far foam on Islands of Alcina.

For rich Levant and old Castile  
Let other seamen freight their galleys;  
With Polo he and Mandeville  
Through stranger seas a dreamy keel  
Sailed into wonder-peopled valleys.

Far continents of flow'r and fruit,  
Of everlasting spring; where fountains  
'Mid flow'rs, with human faces, shoot;  
Where races dwell, both man and brute,  
In cities under golden mountains.

Where cataracts their thunders hurl  
From heights the tempest has at mercy;  
Vast peaks that touch the moon, and whirl  
Wild torrents down of gold and pearl;  
And forests strange as those of Circe.

## THE BOY COLUMBUS

Let rapiere Love lute, in the shade  
Of royal gardens, to the Palace  
And Court, that haunt the balustrade  
Of terraces and still parade  
Their vanity and guile and malice.

Him something calls, diviner yet  
Than Love, more mighty than a lover;  
Heroic Truth, that will not let  
Deed lag; a purpose, westward set,  
In eyes far-seeing to discover.

## NORTH BEACH, FLORIDA

Surge upon surge, the miles of surf uncurl  
    Volute of murmur; and the far shore foams;  
The thundering billows, boiling into pearl,  
    The sea-wind clouds and combs.

Wave upon wave,—as when the Nereids pour,  
    With streaming tresses, landward, when the  
        arms  
Of Tritons reach them, racing towards the  
    shore,—  
        Bursts on the beach that storms.

Oh, thou primeval solitude! that rolled  
    Out of creation when the world was young!  
That shall roll on when man is not, and old  
    The ages yet unsung!

Time shall not flaw thy music!—thou hast  
    heard  
        God's spirit on thy waters, and no night  
Annuls the memory of that one Word  
    Which blossomed into light.

NORTH BEACH, FLORIDA

With such impression as upon thy face  
The soaring seagulls make, man comes and  
came;  
And countless myriads, race on warring race,  
Have found thee thus — the same.

Thy part is — to destroy, and still remain  
Immutable 'midst mutability:  
The symbol of all change, that clothes again  
Mystery in mystery.

## THE STORM

Thor, Thor is out on the hills!

The frown of his fierce brow showing;  
His breath through his red beard blowing,  
With rain, through his beard that it fills.

The forests are taken;  
The mightiest oaks  
Are twisted and shaken  
As by chariot-spokes,  
Where mountains awaken  
To th' hoofs of his yokes,  
Reined sheer with the strength of his arm—  
Ride forth, O Spirit of Storm!

What hope for the sparrow,  
Or nest of the bird!  
Where fords were once narrow,  
What hope for the herd!  
When arrow on arrow  
He empties the third  
Of his quiver against their alarm—  
Descend, O Spirit of Storm!

## THE STORM

You may measure the might that he brings  
By the welkin that echoes his felloes;  
By the fork of the lightning,—that yellows  
The darkness,—the hammer he swings.

The cattle are scattered  
And low from the shore;  
The roses are shattered  
That grew at the door;  
The swallows look tattered,  
And twitter and soar,  
Made glad with the force of his form—  
Rejoice, O Spirit of Storm!

On levels that sunder  
The roar of the main  
He ploughs with the thunder,  
And sows with the rain:  
No sunbeam shall blunder  
Through black till the plain  
Is planted with storm as a farm—  
Sweep on, O Spirit of Storm!

His path is the abysm, which heaps  
The wild wind behind him, and hovers  
A whirlwind before, that uncovers  
The hurricane-lair where he sleeps.

## THE STORM

At night,— through the wrestle  
Of winds that contend,—  
To guard the good vessel  
From rocks that would rend,  
Like a star let it nestle,  
The light, to defend  
The seaman and his from all harm —  
From thee, O Spirit of Storm !

## ON THE JELlico SPUR OF THE CUM- BERLANDS

*To . . . .*

You remember how the mist,  
When we climbed to Devil's Den,  
Pearl-white in the mountain glen,  
And above us, amethyst,

Throbbed and circled? then away,  
Through the wildwoods opposite,  
Torn and scattered, morning-lit,  
Vanished into dewy gray? —

Vague as in romance we saw,  
From the fog one riven trunk,  
Talon-like with branches shrunk,  
Thrust a monster dragon claw.

And we climbed for hours through  
The dawn-dripping Jellicoes,  
To a wooded rock, whence those  
Undulating leagues of blue

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Summits,— mountain-chains that lie  
Dark with forest, bar on bar,—  
Ranged their wild, irregular,  
Purple peaks beneath a sky

Ocean-azure. Range on range  
Billowed their enormous spines,  
Where the rocks and priestly pines  
Sat eternal, without change.

We were sons of Nature then:  
She had taken us to her,  
Drawn us, bound with brier and burr,  
Closer her than other men:

Intimates of all her moods,  
From her bloom-anointed looks,  
Wisdom of no man-made books  
Learned we in those solitudes:

How the seed contained the flower;  
How the acorn held the oak;  
How within the vine awoke  
The wild impulse still to tower:

How in fantasy or mirth,  
Springing when she summoned there,

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Sponge-like fungi everywhere  
Bulged, exuded from the earth:

Coral-vegetable things,  
That the underworld exhaled,  
Bulbous, fluted, ribbed, and scaled,  
Many colored and in rings,

Like the Indian-Pipe that grew  
Pink and white in loamy cracks,  
Flowers of a natural wax,  
She had turned her fancy to.—

On that laureled precipice,  
Where the chestnuts dropped their burrs,  
Warm with balsam of the firs,  
First we felt her mother-kiss

Full of heaven and the wind;  
While the forests, wood on wood,  
Murmured like a multitude  
Giving praise where none hath sinned.—

Freedom met us there; we saw  
Freedom giving audience;  
In her face the eloquence,  
Lightning-like, of love and law:

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Round her, on majestic hips,  
Lounged the giant mountains, where  
Streaming cataracts tossed their hair,  
God and thunder on their lips.—

Oft an eagle, or a hawk,  
Or a scavenger, we knew  
Winged above us through the blue  
By its shadow on the rock.

Or a cloud of templed white  
Moved, a lazy berg of pearl,  
Through the sky's pacific swirl,  
Shot with cool, cerulean light.

So we dreamed an hour upon  
That high rock the lichens mossed,  
While around us, glimmering, tossed  
Golden mintings of the sun :

Then arose ; and a ravine,  
Which a torrent once had worn,  
Made our roadway to the corn  
In the valley, deep and green ;

And the farm-house with its bees,  
Where old-fashioned flowers spun

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Gay rag-carpets in the sun,  
Gray among the apple-trees.

Here we watched the evening fall:  
O'er Wolf Mountain sunset made,  
Huge, a rhododendron, rayed  
Round the sun's cloud-calyxed ball.

Then through scents of herb and soil,  
To the mining-camp we turned,  
In the twinkling dusk discerned  
With its white-washed homes of toil.

• • • • • • • • •

Ah, those nights! — We wandered forth  
On some haunted mountain path,  
When the moon rose late; and rathe  
The large stars, sowed south and north,

Splashed with gold the purple skies;  
And the milky zodiac,  
Rolled athwart the belted black,  
Seemed a path to Paradise.

And we walked or tarried till,  
In the valley-land beneath,  
Like the vapor of a breath  
Breathed in frost, arose the still

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Architecture of the mist:  
And the moon-dawn's necromance  
Touched the mist and made it glance  
Terraced pearl and amethyst.

Then around us, sharp and brusque,  
Night's shrill insects strident strung  
Fairy viols that buzzed and sung,  
Pixy music of the dusk.

And we seemed to hear soft sighs,  
And hushed steps of ghostly things,  
Fluttered feet and rustled wings  
All around us. Fireflies,

Gleaming in the tangled glade,  
Seemed the eyes of warriors,  
Stealing under watching stars  
To some phantom ambuscade;

To the tepees there that gloomed,  
Wigwams of the mist, that slept  
By the woodland side, whence crept  
Shadowy Shawnees moonbeam-plumed.

When the moon rose, like a cup  
Lay the valley, brimming shine

## THE CUMBERLANDS

Of mesmeric mist, like wine,  
To the sky's dim face held up.

As she rose from out the mines  
Of the nacreous darkness, Night  
Met her, clad in dewy light  
'Mid Pine Mountain's sachem pines.

As through fragmentary fleece  
Of the clouds her circle broke,  
Orey-seamed, about us woke  
Myths of Italy and Greece.

As, an orb of sparry quartz,  
Her serene circumference grew,  
Home we turned. And all night through  
Slept the sleep of happy hearts.

## THE WHIPPOORWILL

### I

Above lone woodland ways that led  
To dells the stealthy twilights tread  
The west was hot geranium red;

And still, and still,  
Along old lanes the locusts sow  
With clustered pearls the Maytimes blow,  
Deep in the crimson afterglow,  
We heard the homeward cattle low,  
And then, far off, like some far woe,  
The whippoorwill, the whippoorwill.

### II

Beneath the idle beechen boughs  
We heard the slow bells of the cows  
Come softly, jangling towards the house;

And still, and still,  
Beyond the light that would not die  
Out of the scarlet-haunted sky,  
Beyond the evening-star's white eye

## THE WHIPPOORWILL

Of glittering chalcedony,  
Drained out of dusk the plaintive cry  
Of "whippoorwill," of "whippoorwill."

### III

And in the city oft, when swims  
The pale moon o'er the smoke that dims  
Its disc, I dream of wildwood limbs,  
    And still, and still,  
I seem to hear, where shadows grope  
'Midst ferns and flowers that dewdrops  
    rope,—  
Lost in faint deeps of heliotrope  
Above the clover-sweetened slope,—  
Retreat, despairing, past all hope,  
    The whippoorwill, the whippoorwill.

## IN THE WILDWOOD

I lie where silence sleeps,  
And twilight dreams and sighs;  
Where all heaven's azure peeps  
Blue from one wildflower's eyes;  
Where, in reflecting deeps,  
A world, inverted, lies,  
Of dimmer woods and skies:

Divining God from things  
Humble as weed and bee;  
From songs the wild bird sings  
Guessing at poetry;  
And from each flower that swings,  
Each star-familiar tree,  
Learning philosophy.

## 'A HOLLOW OF THE HILLS

### I

How oft the swallow darted  
    Above its deeps of blue,  
Where leaves close clung or parted  
    To let the sunlight through!  
Where roses, honey-hearted,  
    Hung full of living dew!

### II

How oft, from out the heaven,  
    Upon me blew the balm  
Of soft winds, summer-driven  
    From continents of calm!  
With rustlings as of riven,  
    Sea-sounding pine and palm!

### III

Oft from its leafy cover  
    I watched the red-bird slip;

## A HOLLOW OF THE HILLS

And marked, like some rude lover,  
    The bee, with robber lip,  
Bend down the snowy clover,  
    Or make the wild-rose dip.

## IV

Still darts the soaring swallow  
    Above it; and the rose  
Still blooms within its hollow  
    Where still the runnel flows;  
The brook,—that I shall follow  
    No more,—that seaward goes.

## V

There still the white moon shineth  
    At night through rifted trees;  
Upon the stream that twineth  
    Through blooms that no one sees;  
And on,—as I divineth,—  
    My soul that sighs for these.

## BENEATH THE BEECHES

### I

I long, oh, long to lie  
'Neath beechen branches, twisted,  
Green 'twixt the summer sky;  
The woodland shadows nigh  
Like dryads sunbeam-wristed:  
The livelong day to dream  
Beside a wildwood stream.

### II

I long, oh, long to hear  
The claustral forest breathing,  
Sound soothing to the ear;  
To see the wild-vine near  
Its scarlet blooms unsheathing:  
The livelong day to cross  
Slow o'er the nut-strewn moss.

BENEATH THE BEECHES

III

I long, oh, long to see  
The nesting red-bird singing  
Glad on the wood-rose tree:  
To watch the breezy bee,  
Half in the wildflower, swinging:  
God's livelong day to pass  
Deep in cool forest grass.

IV

Oh, soul, so builded in  
With mart and booth and steeple,  
Brick alley-ways of sin,  
What hope for you to win  
Ways free of pelf and people!  
Ways of the leaf and root  
And soft Mygdonian flute!

## THE BRIDLE-PATH

### I

Through meadows of the ironweeds,  
Whose purple blooms hang, slipping  
The morning dew in twinkling beads,  
The thin path twists and, winding, leads  
Through woodland hollows dripping;  
Down to a creek of rocks and reeds;  
On to a lilyed dam that feeds  
A mill, whose wheel through willow-bredes  
Winks, the white water whipping.

### II

It wends through meads of mint and brush  
Where silvery seeds drift drowsy,  
Or swoon along the heatful hush;  
And where the bobwhite, in the bush,  
The elder, blooming frowsy,  
Keeps calling clear: then through a crush

### THE BRIDLE-PATH

Of crowded saplings, low and lush;  
Then by a pool of flag and rush  
With brier-rose petaled blowsy.

### III

Thence, o'er the ragweed fallow-lot,  
Whose low rail-fence encumbers  
The dense-packed berries ripening hot;  
Where, in the heaven, one far spot  
Of gray, the gray hawk slumbers;  
Then through the greenwood where the rot  
Of leaves and loam smells cool; and, shot  
With dotting dark, the touch-me-not  
Swings curling horns in numbers.

### IV

It winds round rocks that bulge and lie  
Deep in damp ferns and mosses,—  
Each like a giant on his thigh  
Watching some forest quarry die;—  
And thence it frailly crosses  
A bramble-bridge; whence, whirring high,  
A partridge startles,—thwart the sky  
A jarring light,—where, babbling by,  
The brook its diamonds tosses.

## THE BRIDLE-PATH

### V.

And here the cohosh swings its snow,  
Gaunt from the forest springing;  
There gold the sorrel blossoms blow;  
Here vari-colored toadstools sow,  
Or swell the soil; and, swinging,  
The trumpet-vine hangs red and low  
Near boughs,— on which the beech-burrs  
glow,—  
The woodland wind sways to and fro,  
O'er waters wildly ringing.

### VI

It leads us deep into the cane  
Through spice-bush belts, where "tinkle"  
One stray bell sounds, and then again,  
Lost in some lone and leafy lane  
Where smooth the clay ruts wrinkle . . .  
A cloud looms up,— a grayish stain  
Against the blue; — and wet with rain  
The wind blows, denting down the grain  
And leaves, the first drops sprinkle.

### VII

The dust is drilled with raindrops.— One,  
Then two quick gleams, then thunder;

## THE BRIDLE-PATH

And, scurrying with the dust, we run  
Into a whiff of hay and sun,  
    Of cribs and barns; and under  
Low martin-builded eaves,— where dun  
The sparrows shelter,— watch the spun  
Blue rain sweep down, that seems to stun  
    The world with wind and wonder.

## VIII

A crashing wedge of stormy light,  
    Vibrating, blinds, and dashes  
A monster elm to splinters white:  
Then roaring rain: then, blinding bright,  
    A bolt again that crashes. . . .  
The storm is over. Left and right  
The clouds break; and, with green delight,  
Fresh rain scents blow from wood and height  
    Where each blade drips and flashes.

## IX

A ghostly gold burns slowly through  
    The chasm'd clouds; and blended  
With rainy rose and rainy blue,  
The heavens, pearléd with many a hue,  
    Die like a dolphin splendid. . . .

### THE BRIDLE-PATH

High-buoyed in wrack, now one or two  
Slight stars peep out — the pirate clue  
To night's rich hoard.— In dusk and dew  
Here is our pathway ended.

## THE OLD FARM

Dormered and verandaed, cool,  
Locust-girdled on the hill,  
Stained with weather-wear; at Yule  
And Midsummer every sill  
Thresholding the beautiful,

Still I see it standing there,  
Brown above the woodland deep,  
Wrapped in lights of lavender,  
And slow shadows, rocked asleep  
By the warm wind everywhere.

I remember how the spring,  
Liberal-lapped, bewildered its  
Acred orchards, murmuring,  
With the blossoms' budded bits,  
Where the wood-thrush came to sing.

Barefoot Spring, at first who trod,  
Like a beggarmaid, adown

## THE OLD FARM

The wet woodland, where the god,  
With the bright sun for a crown  
And the firmament for rod,

Met her ; clothed her ; wedded her ;  
Her Cophetua : when, lo !  
All the hill, one breathing blur,  
Burst in blossom, gleam and glow,  
Peach and pearl and lavender.

Seckel, blackheart, palpitant,  
Rained their bleaching strays ; and white  
Snowed the damson, bent aslant ;  
Rambow-tree and romanite  
Seemed beneath deep drifts to pant.

And it stood there, brown and gray,  
In the bee-boom and the bloom,  
In the shadow and the ray,  
In the passion and perfume,  
Grave as age among the gay.

Sweet with laughter romped the clear  
Boyish voices round its walls ;  
Rare wild-roses were the dear  
Girlish faces in its halls,  
Music-haunted all the year.

## THE OLD FARM

Far before it meadows full  
Of green pennyroyal sank;  
Clover-dotted as with wool  
Here and there; and now a bank  
Of wild color: and the cool

Dark blue shadows undefined  
Of the clouds rolled overhead;  
Clouds, from which the summer wind  
Blew with rain, and freshly shed  
Dew upon the flower-kind.

Where, through mint and gypsy-lily,  
Runs the rocky brook away,  
Musical among the hilly  
Solitudes,—its flashing spray  
Sunbeam-dashed or shadow-stilly,—

Buried in thick sassafras,  
Memory follows up the hill  
Still some cowbell's mellow brass,  
Where the ruined water-mill  
Looms, half-hid in cane and grass.

'Ah, the old farm! is it set  
On the hilltop still? 'mid musk

## THE OLD FARM

Of the meads? where, violet,  
Deepens all the dreaming dusk,  
And the locust trees hang wet?

While the sunset, far and low,  
On its westward windows dashes  
Primrose or pomegranate glow?  
And above, in lilac splashes,  
Faint, first stars the heavens sow?

Sleeps it still among its roses,  
Yellow roses? while the choir  
Of the lonesome insects dozes?  
And the white moon, filled with fire,  
O'er its mossy roof reposes—  
Sleeps it still among its roses?

## TO SUMMER

### I

Thou sit'st among the sunny silences  
Of terraced hills and woodland galleries,  
Thou utterance of all calm melodies,  
Thou lutanist of Earth's most fecund lute,—  
    Where no false note intrudes  
To mar the silent music,— branch and root,  
Playing the fields ripe, orchards and deep woods,  
    To song similitudes  
Of flower and seed and fruit.

### II

Oft have I felt thee, in some sensuous air,  
Bewitch the wide wheat-acres everywhere  
To imitated gold of thy rich hair:  
The peach, by thy red lips' delicious trouble,  
    Blown into gradual dyes  
Of crimson, have I seen: have watched thee  
    double —

## TO SUMMER

With interluded music of thine eyes —

    The grapes' rotundities,

    Bubble by purple bubble.

## III

Deliberate uttered into life intense,

Out of thy song's melodious eloquence

Beauty evolves its just preëminence :

The lily, from some pensive-smitten chord

    Drawing significance

Of purity, a visible hush stands : starred

With splendor, from thy passionate utterance,

    The rose tells its romance

    In blushing word on word.

## IV

As star by star day harps in evening,

The inspiration of all things that sing

Is in thy hands and from their touch takes wing :

All brooks, all birds,— whom song can never  
    sate,—

    Even the wind and rain,

And frogs and insects, singing soon and late,

Thy sympathies inspire, thy heart's refrain,

    Whose sounds invigorate

    With rest life's weary brain.

## III

TO SUMMER

V

And as the night, like some mysterious rune,  
Its beauty makes emphatic with the moon,  
Thou lutest us no immaterial tune:  
But where dim whispers haunt the cane and  
corn,  
By thy still strain made strong,  
Earth's awful avatar,— in whom is born  
Thy own deep music,— labors all night long  
With growth, assuring morn  
Assumes like onward song.

## A GRAY DAY

### I

Long volleys of wind and of rain,  
And the rain on the drizzled pane,  
    And the day ends chill and murk;  
But on yesterday's eve, I trow,  
The new-moon's thorn-thin bow  
Stabbed rosy through gold and through glow,  
    Like a rich, barbaric dirk.

### II

The throats of the snapdragons,—  
Cool-colored with gold like the dawns  
    That come with spring o'er the hills,—  
Are filled with a sweet rain, fine,  
Of starry, scintillant shine,  
A faery vat of thin wine,  
    That the rain for the elfins fills.

A GRAY DAY

III

Dabbled the poppies shrink,  
And the coxcomb and the pink;  
And the candytuft's damp crown  
Droops, dribbled, low bowed i' the wet;  
And rows of the mignonette  
Little musk-sacks open set,  
Which the weight o' the dew drags down.

IV

Stretched taunt 'twixt the blades of grass,  
A gossamer-fibered glass,  
That the garden-spider spun,  
The web, where the round rain clings  
In the sag o' its middle, swings —  
A hammock for elfin things  
When the stars succeed the sun.

V

And, mark, where the pale gourd grows  
As high as the climbing rose,  
How the tiger-moth is pressed  
To that wide leaf's under side.—  
And I know where the red wasps hide,  
And the brown bees,— that defied  
The first strong gusts,— distressed.

## A GRAY DAY

### VI

Yet I feel that the gray will blow  
Aside for an afterglow;  
And the wind, on a sudden, toss  
Drenched boughs; a pattering shower  
Athwart the red dusk in a glower,  
Big drops heard hard on each flower,  
The grass and the flowering moss.

### VII

And then for a minute, may be,—  
A pearl, hollow-worn, of the sea,—  
A glimmer of moon will smile,  
And a star, rinsed clean, through the dusk:  
And a freshness of moonlit musk  
O'er the showery lawns blow brusque  
As spice from an Indian Isle.

## THE MOOD O' THE EARTH

My heart is high as the day is clear,  
As the wind in the wood that blows;  
My heart is high with a mood that 's cheer,  
And glows like a sun-blown rose.

My heart is high, and up and away  
Like a bird in the skies' deep blue;  
My heart goes singing through the day,  
As glad as a bee i' the dew.

My heart, my heart is high; its beat  
Is wild as the scent o' the wood,  
The wild sweet wind, with its pulse of heat,  
And its musk of blossom and bud.

My heart is high; and it leads my feet  
Where the sense of summer is full,  
To woods and waters where lovers meet  
To hills where the creeks run cool.

## THE MOOD O' THE EARTH

My heart is one, is one with the heart,  
With the joy o' the bee that comes  
And sucks i' the flowers, that dip apart  
For his dusty body that hums.

My heart is glad as the glad redstart,  
The flame-flecked bird, the spotted bird,  
Whose lilt my soul has got by heart,  
Fitting each note with a word.

God's love! I tread the wind and air!  
Am one with the hoiden wind;  
And the stars that swim in the blue, I swear,  
Right soon in my hair I 'll find.

To live high up, a life o' the mist,  
With the cloud-things in white skies,—  
With their limbs of pearl and of amethyst,—  
That laugh cerulean eyes!

To creep and to suck, like an elfin thing,  
In the aching heart of a rose;  
In the bluebell's ear to cling and swing,  
And whisper what no one knows!

To live on wild-honey, as fresh, as thin  
As the rain that 's left in a flower!

### THE MOOD O' THE EARTH

And roll forth, golden from feet to chin,  
In the pollen's Danaë-shower!

Or free, bird-hearted, bend back the throat,  
With a vigorous look at the blue,  
And launch from my soul one wild, true note,  
Is the thing that my heart would do!

God's life! the blood o' the earth is mine!  
And the mood o' the earth I 'll take,  
And brim my soul with her wonderful wine,  
And sing till my heart doth break!

## NOONING

### I

Weak winds that make the waters wink;  
White clouds that sail from lands of Fable  
To white Utopias, vague, that brink  
Sky-gulfs of blue unfathomable:  
Their rolling shadows drifting  
O'er hills of forest, lifting  
Wild peaks of purple range, that loom and sink.

### II

Warm knolls, whereon the Summer dreams;  
And droning dells, where all her brightness  
Lies, lulled with hymns of mountain-streams'  
Far-foaming falls of windy whiteness:  
Where, from the glooming hollow,  
With cawing crows that follow,  
The hunted hawk wings wearily and screams.

## NOONING

### III

Dry-buzzing heat and drought that shrills  
With one harsh locust's lonesomé whirring;  
No voice amid the answering hills  
Recedes in echoes far-recurring;  
As when, with twilight wimpled,  
The Morning, rosy dimpled,  
From dewy tops called o'er responding rills.

### IV

Wan with sweet summer hangs the deep  
Hot heaven with the high sun hearted—  
A great, wide bluebell bloom asleep  
With golden-pistiled petals parted.—  
So lone, one would not startle  
If from yon wood should dartle  
Some wildwood Dream, some Myth the wild-  
woods keep.

## THE LOG-BRIDGE

### I

Last month, where the old log-bridge is laid  
O'er the woodland creek, in the belts o' the  
shade,

To the right and the left, pink-packed, was  
made

A gloaming glory of scented tangle  
By the bramble roses there — that wade,  
High-heaped, from the banks — with many a  
braid

That, wilting, powdered the ruts, and swayed,  
To the waters beneath, loose loops of spangle;  
Where the breeze that blew and the beam that  
rayed

Were murmurous-soft with the bees a-  
wrangle.

### II

This month — 't is August — the lane that leads  
To the bramble-bridge runs waste with weeds,  
That bloom bright saffron, or satin seeds

## THE LOG-BRIDGE

Of thistle-fleece blow at you, hazy :  
Starry the lane with the thousand bredes  
Of the yellow daisy, and bud-like beads  
Of marigold eyes, around which speeds  
The butterfly, sumptuous with mottle and  
lazy ;  
Whereunder the pewee picks and pleads,  
On the sumach's tassel that dips to the daisy.

## III

All golden the spot in the noon's gold shine,  
Where the yellow-bird sits with eyes like wine  
And swings and whistles ; where, line on line,  
In coils of warmth the sunbeams nestle ;  
Where cool by the pool (where the crawfish,  
fine  
As a shadow's shadow, darts dim) to mine  
The wet creek-clay with their peevish whine,  
Come mason-hornets ; and roll and wrestle  
With balls of clay they carry, and twine  
In hollow nests on the joists o' the trestle.

## IV.

Where the horsemint shoots through the grasses,  
— high  
On the root-thick rivage that roofs,— a dry

## THE LOG-BRIDGE

Gray knob that bristles with pink, the sigh  
Of crickets is heard; and the leaves' deep  
bosoms  
Are pierced, at dusk, with a bird's quick cry,  
A passing bird that twitters by:  
And the frogs' grave antiphons rise and die;  
And here, to drink, come the wild opossums:  
And here, to-night, will you and I  
Linger and lean while the great moon blos-  
soms.

## AMONG THE KNOBS

There is a place embanked with brush  
Three wooded knobs beyond,  
Lost, in a valley, where the lush  
Wild eglantine blows blond.

Where light the dogwoods earliest  
Their torches of white fires,  
And, bee-bewildered, east and west  
The red haws build their spires.

The wild crab-apples' flowery sprays  
Blur through the pensive gloom  
A fragrant pink; and by lone ways  
The close blackberries bloom.

I love the spot: a shallow brook  
Slips from the forest, near  
A cane-brake and a violet nook;  
Its rustling depths so clear

## AMONG THE KNOBS

The minnows glimmer where they glide  
Above its rocky bed:  
A boyhood-haunted brook, not wide,  
That has its sparkling head

Among the rainy hills; and drops  
By five low waterfalls —  
Wild music of a hundred stops —  
Between the forests' walls:

Down to a water-gate, that hangs  
Across the stream; a dull  
Portcullis rude, whose wooden fangs  
The moss makes beautiful.

The brass-bright dragonflies about  
Its seeding grasses swim;  
The streaked wasps, worrying in and out,  
Dart sleepily and slim.

Here in the moon-gold moss, that glows  
Like pools of moonlight, dies  
The pale anemone; and blows  
The bluet, blue as skies.

And, where in April tenderly  
The wild geranium made

## AMONG THE KNOBS

A thin, peculiar fragrance, we,  
Cool in pellucid shade,

Found wild strawberries just a-bud;  
Wild berries, tart and fresh,—  
Pale scarlet as a wood-bird's blood,—  
That May's low vines would mesh.

Once from that hill a farm-house 'mid  
Deep orchards — cozy brown,—  
In lilacs and old roses hid,—  
With picket-fence looked down.

O'er ruins now the roses guard;  
The plum and seckel-pear  
And apricot rot on the sward  
Their wasted ripeness there.

Again when huckleberries blow  
Their waxen bells I 'll tread  
That dear accustomed way; and go  
Adown that orchard; led

To that avoided spot, which seems  
The haunt of vanished springs;  
Lost as the hills in drowsy dreams  
Of visionary things.

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

Here on this jutting headland, where the trees  
Spread a dusk carpet for the sun to cast  
And count his golden guineas on, we 'll rest.  
Behold th' Ohio Falls: see how it seethes!  
Though hardly heard from this high, wooded  
point,  
Yet how it still confuses tongue and ear  
With its subdued and low monotonous roar!  
Not as it did, however, when we stood  
And marked it from the spanning of the bridge  
Rushing beneath, impetuous as a herd,—  
A tameless herd, with manes of flying spray,—  
Between the pillars towering above.  
No more does it confound us and confuse;  
Its clamor here is softened to a sound,  
Incessant and subdued, like that which haunts  
The groves of spring, when, like some dim sur-  
prise,  
A wind, precursor of the rain, rides down  
From a gray cloud and sets the leafy tongues  
Cool-gossiping of the approaching shower.

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

There runs the dam; and where its dark line cuts  
The river's sheen, already you may see  
The ripples glancing to the summer sun,  
As if a host had couched a thousand spears  
And tossed a thousand plumes of fleecy foam,  
In answer to the challenge of the Falls,  
Blown from his limestone battlements, and cried  
From his wave-builded city's roaring walls.  
And there, you see, the waves like champions  
charge;  
Crowding, wild form on form, their foam-hoofs  
beat  
The ragged rocks that roll them on their way:  
Billowing they come; knight-like, to ringing  
lists,  
With shout on shout, tossing a thousand plumes,  
A thousand spears in sparkling tournament;  
Lifting, opposing each, a silvery shield  
Or shining pennon, now that sinks or soars,  
And many a glittering sword of twinkling foam,  
And many a helmet, shattered in flakes of froth,  
That, to the trumpeting wind, hisses away:  
While, o'er it all, swell out the rush and roar  
Of onset, as of battle borne afar.—  
On, on they come, a beautiful, mad troop!  
On, on, along the sandy banks that fling  
Red pebble-freckled arms far out to stay

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

Their ruinous rush, the knightly strife of waves,  
Warring, and winding wild their watery horns.

Look, where a thousand oily eddies whirl,  
And turn and turn like wheels of liquid steel  
Below this headland! 'T is a place that none  
Has bottomed yet with sounding lead and line.  
Like some huge kraken, coiling vast its length,  
The Eddy sleeps; and, bending from the shores,  
The spotted sycamores have gazed and gazed,  
Watching its slumber as gray giants might  
A dragon in the hollow of gaunt hills,  
Its serpent bulk wound round some magic hoard.  
So long they 've watched, their ancient backs  
have grown  
Humped, gnarled, and bent, but still they gaze  
and gaze,  
Leaning above; and from the glassy waves  
Their images stare back their wonderment.  
Haply they see the guardian Genius lie  
At the dark bottom in an oozy cave  
Of coral; webbed, recumbent on his mace  
Of mineral; his locks of dripping green  
Circling a crown of ore; his fishy eyes  
Dull with the aqueous dullness of his realms.

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

But when the storm 's abroad and whips the waves  
With stinging lashes of the myriad rain,  
Or scars with thunder some ancestral oak,  
Sire of a forest, then he wakes in wrath,  
And on the dark foundation of the stream  
Rises, a monarch, crowned with iron crown,  
And hurls his challenge upward at the storm,  
And rages through the waters; heaves and breaks  
Through the wild waves, whose round and murky bulks,  
Ribbed white with foam, wallow their monster way,  
Like giant herds, along yon edge of rock  
O'erstrewn with petrifications of far time;  
Mollusk and trilobite and honeycomb  
Of whitest coral; and with mass on mass  
Of root-like reptiles; writhings turned to rock;  
Huge saurian bulks that, haply, sported there,  
Convolved; and, in a moment, when the change,—  
Which made and unmade continents and seas,  
That teemed and groaned with mammoth and plesiosaur,—  
Came, with upheaval of the universe,

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

Thro' all their monster spines were struck to  
stone.

There where uprises a wild knoll, o'erstrewn  
With wrecks of ancient forest, in mid-stream  
Once rose an island, green and beautiful  
With willow and beech, poplar and sycamore;  
A river-island where the woodman built,—  
Stream-guarded from the savage-haunted  
shore,—

His rude log cabin. Here he sowed his maize;  
Here saw it tassel in the summer heat,  
And glance like ranks of feathered Indians  
through

The glimmering vistas of the broken wood;  
Here reaped and sheaved its stalks, all ivory-  
eared,

In shocks like wigwam rows, when like a maid,  
An Indian maid, ruddy in dogwood beads,  
The autumn came, soft o'er the sunset hills,  
That blushed for love, and underneath her feet  
Cast untold gold in leaves and yellow fruit.

Here dwelt the pioneer and here he died,  
And mingled his rough dust with the raw earth  
And loam of what was once an island; now  
A bed of limestone rock and water pools,—  
Where, in the quarry, you may see the blast

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

Spout heavenward the dust and dirt and stone,  
And flap and pound its echoes round the hills  
In giant strokes as of some Titan hammer;—  
A mound of stump-pierced soil where once an  
isle,—

As rich and fair in forest and in field  
As any isle that rises to a sail  
In tropic seas,—arose to kiss the sun.

There lies the other half of what was once  
Corn Island: broad the channel beats between.  
Lower it lies, and mantled with dwarf brakes  
Of willow and of cottonwood and beech,  
Degenerate offsprings of the mighty boles  
That once o'erbrowed the stream in majesty  
Of tall primeval beauty. In the morn,  
Ere yet the east assumes its faintest blush,  
Here you may hear the melancholy snipe  
Piping, or see her paddling in the pools  
That splash the low bed of the rocky soil.

Here once the Indian stole in natural craft  
From wahoo-bush to bush, from tree to tree,  
His head plumes like a bird, below, above,  
Fluttering and nodding 'mid the undergrowth;  
In his brown hand the pliant, polished bow,  
And at his back his gaudy quiver filled

## THE FALLS OF THE OHIO

With tufted arrows headed blue with flint.  
And while the deep flamingo-colored west  
Flamed on his ruddy cheek, and airy fire  
Struck rosy 'thwart the stream, he, swift as  
thought,  
Strung his quick bow and through the gray wild  
goose,  
That rose with clamor from the rushy pool,  
Sent a fleet arrow; crested with the quills  
Which yesterday, perhaps, its mate's gray wing  
Made beautiful; and plucked to decorate  
The painted shaft that should to-day speed home  
And reddens all their white with kindred blood:  
It falling, gasping at his moccasined feet,  
Breathed out its wild life, while the lonely brave  
Whooped to the sunset, and yon faint blue hills  
Answered his exultation with a whoop.

1885.

## FALL FANCIES

Far off a wind blew, and I heard  
    Wild echoes of the woods reply —  
The herald of some royal word,  
    With bannered trumpet, blown on high,  
        Meseemed, then passed me by :

Who summoned marvels there to meet,  
    In pomp, upon a cloth of gold ;  
Where berries of the bitter-sweet,  
    That, splitting, showed the coals they hold,  
        Sowed garnets through the wold :

Where, under tents of maples, seeds  
    Of smooth carnelian, oval red,  
The spice-bush spangled : where, like beads,  
    The dogwood's rounded rubies — fed  
        With fire — blazed and bled.

And there I saw amid the rout  
    Of months, in richness cavalier,  
A minnesinger — lips apout ;  
    A gypsy face ; straight as a spear ;  
        A rose stuck in his ear :

## FALL FANCIES

Eyes, sparkling like old German wine,  
    All mirth and moonlight; naught to spare  
Of slender beard, that lent a line  
    Unto his lip; October there,  
        With chestnut curling hair.

His blue baretta swept its plume  
    White through the leaves; his purple hose,  
Puffed at the thighs, made gleam of gloom;  
    His tawny doublet, slashed with rose,  
        And laced with crimson bows,

Outshone the wahoo's scarlet pride,  
    The haw, in rich vermillion dressed:  
A dagger dangling at his side,  
    A slim lute, banded to his breast,  
        Wheron his hands did rest,

I saw him come. . . . And, lo, to hear  
    The lilt of his approaching lute,  
No wonder that the regnant Year  
    Bent down her beauty, blushing mute,  
        Her heart beneath his foot.

## LATE OCTOBER

Bulged from its cup the dark brown acorn falls,  
And by its gnarly saucer, in the stream's  
Clear puddles, swells; the sweet-gum's spike-  
crowned balls  
Beside them lie; and, opening all their seams,  
Beneath the chestnut-tree the burry hulls  
Split, and, within, each nut like copper  
gleams.

Burst silver white, nods,— an exploded husk  
Of snowy, woolly smoke,— the milk-weed's  
puff  
Along the orchard's fence; where in the dusk  
And ashen weeds,— as some grim Satyr's  
rough  
Red, breezy cheeks burn through his beard,— the  
brusque  
Crab-apples glow, wind-tumbled from above.

'And under withered leaves the crickets' clicks  
Seem some dim dirge sighed into memory's  
ears;

## LATE OCTOBER

One bird sits in the sumach, flits and picks  
Its sour seeds. Thro' all the wood one hears  
The dropping hickories. Round the hay's railed  
ricks,  
Among the fields, gather the lowing steers.

Some slim, bud-bound Leimoniad hath flocked,  
Like birds, the flowers, herding from their  
homes  
To warmer woods and skies. Where once were  
rocked  
Unnumbered bees within unnumbered blooms,  
One feeble bee clings to one bloom, or, locked  
Within it, dreams of summer's oozing combs.

Winds shake the maples, and all suddenly  
A storm of leafy stars around you freaks,—  
Some Dryad's tattered raiment. To her knee  
Wading, the Naiad haunts her stream that  
streaks  
Through woodland waifs. Hark! Pan for  
Helike  
Flutes in the forest, while he seeks and seeks.

## A NOVEMBER WALK

### I

#### *Morning*

The hoar frost crisps beneath the feet;  
And, sparkling in the morning's strength,  
The fence, along its straggling length,  
Gleams as if wrought of virgin sleet.

On broom-sedge fields and sassafras  
Neglectfully the dim wind lifts  
The dead leaves; and around me drifts  
The milkweed, shaken from the grass.

Reluctantly and one by one  
The useless leaves drift slowly down;  
And, seen through woodland vistas, brown  
The nut-tree patters in the sun.

Where pools the brook beneath its fall  
With scales of ice its edge is bound;  
And on the pebbles scattered round  
The ooze is frozen; each a ball,

## A NOVEMBER WALK

It seems, of crystal fallen there.

And now the wind sweeps through the wood  
With sighings, and the solitude  
Seems shaken with a mighty care.

Decay and melancholy drape  
The near-by hills in mysteries  
Of mist, through which the rocks and trees  
Loom, hazy, each a phantom shape.

To sullenness the surly crow  
All his derisive being yields,  
And o'er the barren stubble-fields  
Flaps, cawless, wrapped in hungry woe.

## II

### *Evening*

As eve comes on the teasel stoops  
Its spike-crowned cone before the blast:  
The tattered leaves drive whirling past  
In frantic and fantastic troops.

The matted elder-copse sigh;  
Their broad, blue combs, with berries  
weighed,  
Like heavy pendulums are swayed  
With every gust that wanders by.

## A NOVEMBER WALK

Through broken walls of tangled brier,  
That hedge the lane, the sumachs thrust  
Their scarlet torches, red as rust,  
Lit with the sunset's stolid fire.

The eve is here: Cold, hard, and drear  
The cloudless west with livid white  
Of flaming silver walls the night  
Far as one star's thin rays appear.

Wedged 'thwart the west's white luridness  
The wild geese wing; from roseless domes  
The far "honk" of the leader comes  
Lonely and harsh and colorless.

The west dies down; and in its cup,  
Shadow on shadow, pours the night;  
The east glows with a mystic light;  
The stars are keen; the moon comes up.

## THE WHITE EVENING

On hills, beneath the steely skies,  
The wind-tossed forests rock and roar:  
Along the river's ringing shore  
Homeward the skimming skater flies.

On windy meads of icy brakes,  
Where, sheathed in sleet, the haw-tree stands,  
The moon looks down on glistening lands,  
Where with the cold each bramble shakes.

Last night the sleet made white the world:  
All day the wind moaned in the pines:  
Now like a wolf, that whines and whines,  
Like some wild wolf its hate is hurled

Against the hut upon the wold,  
And the one willow by the stream:  
Where, huddled, in the moon's chill gleam,  
The houseless hare leaps through the cold.

The moon sinks low, the thin new-moon,  
And with it, like a bit of spar,

## THE WHITE EVENING

Sinks down the large white evening-star,  
Beneath which earth seems crystal-hewn.

Slim o'er the tree-tops, weighed with white,  
The country church's spire doth swell,  
A scintillating icicle;  
While fitfully the village light

Stabs, stains with sallow stars the dark:  
Homeward the creaking wagons strain:  
The smithy glares: the tavern's vane  
Points northward in its ghostly sark.

And from the north, with stinging lash,  
Driving his herds of snow and sleet,  
Upon his steed of wind, whose feet  
Hurl through the iron woods and crash

Along the hills, with blow on blow,  
The tempest sweeps; before his shout  
The moon and stars are blotted out,  
And fold on fold rolls down the snow.

## DREAMS

My thoughts have borne me far away  
To beauties of an older day,  
Where, crowned with roses, stands the Dawn,  
Striking her seven-stringed barbiton  
Of flame, whose chords give being to  
The seven colors, hue for hue;  
The music of the color-dream  
She builds the day from, beam by beam.

My thoughts have borne me far away  
To myths of a diviner day,  
Where, sitting on the mountain, Noon  
Sings to the pines a sun-soaked tune  
Of rest and shade and clouds and skies,  
Wherein her calm dreams idealize  
Light as a presence, heavenly fair,  
Sleeping with all her beauty bare.

My thoughts have borne me far away  
To visions of a wiser day,  
Where, stealing through the wilderness,

## DREAMS

Night walks, a sad-eyed votaress,  
And prays with mystic words she hears  
Behind the thunder of the spheres,  
The starry utterance that is hers  
With which she fills the universe.

## THE BROOK

To it the forest tells  
The mystery that haunts its heart and folds  
Its form in cogitation deep, that holds  
The shadow of each myth that dwells  
In nature — be it Nymph or Fay or Faun —  
And whispering of them to the dales and dells,  
It wanders on and on.

To it the heaven shows  
The secret of its soul ; true images  
Of dreams that form its aspect ; and with these  
Reflected in its countenance it goes,  
With pictures of the skies, the dusk and dawn,  
Within its breast, as every blossom knows,  
For them to gaze upon.

Through it the world-soul sends  
Its heart's creating pulse that beats and sings  
The music of maternity whence springs  
All life ; and shaping earthly ends,—  
From the deep sources of the heavens drawn,—  
Planting its ways with beauty, on it wends,  
On and for ever on.

## THE OLD SWING

Under the boughs of spring  
She swung in the old rope-swing.

Her cheeks, with their happy blood,  
Glowed pink as the apple-bud.

Her eyes, with their deep delight,  
Shone glad as the stars of night.

Her curls, with their romp and fun,  
Tossed hoiden to wind and sun.

Her lips, with their laughter shrill,  
Rippled like some wild rill.

Under the boughs of spring  
She swung in the old rope-swing.

And I,— who leaned on the fence,  
Watching her innocence,

### THE OLD SWING

As, under the boughs that bent,  
Now high, now low, she went,

In her soul the ecstasies  
Of the stars, the brooks, the breeze,—

Had given the rest of my years,  
With their blessings, and hopes, and fears,

To have been as she was then;  
And, just for a moment, again

A boy in the old rope-swing  
Under the boughs of spring.

## TO AUTUMN

I feel thee as one feels a flower's,  
A dead flower's fragrance in a room,—  
A dim, gray grief that haunts the hours  
With sad perfume.

Thou charm'st me as a ghostly lily  
Might charm a garden's withered space,  
With the pale pathos and the chilly  
Hush of thy face.

I hearken in thy fogs; I hearken  
When, like the phantom of dead Night,  
With immaterial limbs they darken  
The day with white.

With wrecks of rain and mad winds, heaping  
Red ruins of riven rose and leaf,  
Make sad my heart, O Autumn! sweeping  
The world with grief.

## WINTER DREAMS

How does it come that now I go  
Down ways made blue with bluets' eyes?  
Along the creek-road as the crow  
With mocking laughter flies?

A wild bird beats a crippled wing  
To lure me from its brush-built nest;  
Then, like a brook, I hear it sing  
Its wildwood happiest.

Beyond the orchard hills are dells  
Of knee-deep huckleberries, white  
With little bell-blooms, May-time swells  
With sweetness and delight.

The faun wakes in me, wild and keen,  
And, with the joy the rathe months hold,  
Kicks happy heels in deeps of green  
And rolls in deeper gold.

My Shakespeare falls: I wake: and frost  
And ice seam every flower-bed:

## WINTER DREAMS

Where once each stalk, an Edgar, tossed,  
Poor Tom now shakes instead.

Where once th' gladiole, gleaming, shook  
A wand of folly at the sun,  
The humped stock hath a withered look —  
The poor, pale Fool is done.

A great, gray beard the rose-bush hath, —  
An old king's, — where hangs many a tear,  
Near the dead lily by the path —  
Cordelia and Lear.

## **TANSY AND SWEET-ALYSSUM**



## A FLOWER OF THE FIELDS

Bee-bitten in the orchard hung  
The peach; or, fallen in the weeds,  
Lay rotting, where still sucked and sung  
The gray bee, boring to the seed's  
Pink pulp and honey blackly stung.

The orchard-path, which wound around  
The garden,— with its heat one twinge  
Of dinning locusts,— picket-bound  
And ragged, brought me where one hinge  
Held up the gate that scraped the ground.

All seemed the same: the martin-box —  
Sun-warped, with pygmy balconies —  
Still stood, with all its twittering flocks,  
Perched on its pole above the peas  
And silvery-seeded onion-stocks.

The clove-pink and the rose; the clump  
Of coppery sunflowers, with the heat  
Sick to the heart: the garden stump,  
Red with geranium-pots, and sweet  
With moss and ferns, this side the pump.

## A FLOWER OF THE FIELDS

I rested with one hesitant hand  
Upon the gate. The lonesome day,  
Droning with insects, made the land  
One dry stagnation. Soaked with hay  
And scents of weeds the hot wind fanned.

I breathed the sultry scents, my eyes  
Parched as my lips. And yet I felt  
My limbs were ice.— As one who flies  
To some wild woe.— How sleepy smelt  
The hay-hot heat that soaked the skies!

Noon nodded; dreamier, lonesomer  
For one long, plaintive, forest-side  
Bird-quaver.— And I knew me near  
Some heartbreak anguish. . . . She had  
died.  
I felt it, and no need to hear.

I passed the quince- and pear-tree; where,  
All up the porch, a grape-vine trails.—  
How strange that fruit, whatever air  
Or earth it grows in, never fails  
To find its native flavor there!

And she was as a flower, too,  
That grows its proper bloom and scent

### A FLOWER OF THE FIELDS

No matter what the soil: she, who,  
Born better than her place, still lent  
Grace to the lowness she knew. . . .

They met me at the porch and were  
Gaunt-eyed with weeping.— Then the room  
Shut out the country's heat and purr,  
And left light stricken into gloom—  
So love and I might look on her.

## ON STONY-RUN

O cheerly, cheerly by the road,  
And merrily down the hillet,  
And where the bottom-lands are sowed  
With bristle-bearded millet;

Then o'er a pebbled path it goes  
Through woodland dale and dingle,  
Unto a farmstead's windowed rose,  
And roof of moss and shingle.

Then darkly, darkly through the brush,  
And dimly round the boulder,  
Where cane and water-weeds grow lush,  
Its current clear flows colder.

Then by the cedared way that leads,  
Through burr and bramble-thickets,  
Unto a burial-ground of weeds  
Fenced in with broken pickets.

## ON STONY-RUN

Then slowly, slowly down the vale,  
And wearily through the rushes,  
Where sunlight of the noon is pale,  
Its shadowy water hushes.

For oft her young face smiled upon  
Its deeps here, willow-shaded;  
And oft with bare feet in the sun  
Its shallows there she waded.

No more beneath the twinkling leaves  
Shall stand the farmer's daughter!—  
Sing softly past the cottage eaves,  
O memory-haunted water!

No more shall bend her laughing face  
Above it where the rose is!—  
Sigh softly past the burial-place  
Where all her youth reposes.

## HOME

Among the fields the camomile  
Seems blown mist in the lightning's glare:  
Cool, rainy odors drench the air;  
Night speaks above; the angry smile  
Of storm within her stare.

The way that I shall take to-night  
Is through the wood whose branches fill  
The road with double darkness, till,  
Between the boughs, a window's light  
Shines out upon the hill.

The fence; and then the path that goes  
Around a trailer-tangled rock,  
Through puckered pink and hollyhock,  
Unto a latch-gate's unkempt rose,  
And door whereat I knock.

Bright on the old-time flower-place  
The lamp streams through the foggy pane:  
The door is opened to the rain:  
And in the door — her happy face  
And outstretched hands again.

## DUSK IN THE WOODS

Three miles of trees it is: and I  
Came through the woods that waited, dumb,  
For the cool summer dusk to come;  
And lingered there to watch the sky  
Up which the gradual sunset climb.

A tree-toad quavered in a tree;  
And then a sudden whippoorwill  
Called overhead, so wildly shrill  
The sleeping wood, it seemed to me,  
Cried out and then again was still.

Then through dark boughs its stealthy flight  
An owl took; and, at drowsy strife,  
The cricket tuned its fairy fife;  
And like a ghostflower, silent white,  
The wood-moth glimmered into life.

And in the punk-wood everywhere  
The insects ticked, or bored below  
The rotted bark; and, glow on glow,  
The lambent fireflies here and there  
Lit up their jack-o'-lantern show.

## DUSK IN THE WOODS

I heard a vesper-sparrow sing,  
Withdrawn, it seemed, into the far  
Slow sunset's tranquil cinnabar;  
The crimson, softly smouldering  
Behind gaunt trunks, with its one star.

A dog barked: and down ways that gleamed,  
Through dew and clover, faint the noise  
Of cow-bells moved. And then a voice,  
That sang a-milking, so it seemed,  
Made glad my heart as some glad boy's.

And then the lane: and, full in view,  
A farm-house with a rose-grown gate,  
And honeysuckle paths, await  
For night, the moon, and love and you —  
These are the things that made me late.

## COMRADES

Down through the woods, along the way  
That fords the stream ; by rock and tree,  
Where in the bramble-bell the bee  
Swings ; and through twilights green and gray  
The red-bird flashes suddenly,  
My thoughts went wandering to-day.

I found the fields where, row on row,  
The blackberries hang black their fruit ;  
Where, nesting at the elder's root,  
The partridge whistles soft and low ;  
The fields, that bellow to the foot  
Of those old hills we used to know.

There lay the pond, still willow-bound,  
On whose bright surface, when the hot  
Noon burnt above, we chased the knot  
Of water-striders ; while around  
Our heads, like bits of rainbow, shot  
The dragon-flies without a sound.

## COMRADES

The pond, above which evening bent  
To gaze upon her gypsy face;  
Wherein the twinkling night would trace  
A vague, inverted firmament;  
In which the green frogs tuned their bass,  
And firefly sparkles came and went.

The old-time woods we often ranged,  
When we were playmates, you and I;  
The old-time fields, with boyhood's sky  
Still blue above them! — Naught was changed!  
Nothing! — Alas! then tell me why  
Should we be? whom the years estranged.

## THE ROCK

Here, at its base, in dingled deeps  
Of spice-bush, where the ivy creeps,  
    The cold spring scoops its hollow;  
And there, three mossy stepping-stones  
Make ripple murmurs; undertones  
    Of foam, whose low falls follow  
A voice far in the wood that drones.

The quail pipes here when noons are hot;  
And here, in coolness sunlight-shot,  
    Beneath a roof of briars,  
The red fox skulks at close of day;  
And here, at night, the shadows gray  
    Stand like Franciscan friars,  
With moonbeam beads whereon they pray.

Here yawns the woodchuck's dark-dug hole;  
And there the tunnel of the mole  
    Heaves under weed and flower;  
A sandy pit-fall here and there

## THE ROCK

The ant-lion digs and lies a-lair  
And here, for sun and shower,  
The spider weaves a silvery snare.

The poison-oak's rank tendrils twine  
The rock's south side; the trumpet-vine,  
With crimson bugles sprinkled,  
Makes green its eastern side; the west  
Is rough with lichens; and, gray-pressed  
Into an angle wrinkled,  
The hornets hang an oblong nest.

The north is hid from sun and star,  
And here,—like an Inquisitor  
Of Faëry Inquisition,  
Who roots out Elfland heresy,—  
Deep in the rock, cowled shadowy  
And grave as his commission,  
The owl sits magisterially.

## STANDING-STONE CREEK

A weed-grown slope, whereon the rain  
Has washed the brown rocks bare,  
Leads tangled from a lonely lane  
Down to a creek's broad stair  
Of stone, that, through the solitude,  
Winds onward to a quiet wood.

An intermittent roof of shade  
The beech above it throws;  
Along its steps a balustrade  
Of beauty builds the rose;  
In which, a stately lamp of green,  
At intervals, the cedar 's seen.

The water, carpeting each ledge  
Of rock that runs across,  
Glints 'twixt a flow'r-embroidered edge  
Of ferns and grass and moss;  
And in its deeps the wood and sky  
Seem patterns of the softest dye.

## STANDING-STONE CREEK

Long corridors of pleasant dusk  
Within the house of leaves  
It reaches; where, on looms of musk,  
The ceaseless locust weaves  
A web of summer; and perfume  
Trails a sweet gown from room to room.

Green windows of the boughs, that swing,  
It passes, where the notes  
Of birds are glad thoughts entering,  
And butterflies are motes;  
And now a vista where the day  
Opens a door of wind and ray.

It is a stairway for all sounds  
That haunt the woodland sides;  
On which, boy-like, the Southwind bounds,  
Girl-like, the sunbeam glides;  
And, like fond parents, following these,  
The old-time dreams of rest and peace.

## “CLOUDS OF THE AUTUMN NIGHT”

Clouds of the autumn night,  
Under the hunter's-moon,—  
Ghostly and windy white,—  
Whither, like leaves wild strewn,  
Take ye your stormy flight?

Out of the west, where dusk,  
From her red window-sill,  
Leaned with a wand of tusk,  
Witch-like, and wood and hill  
Phantomed with mist and musk

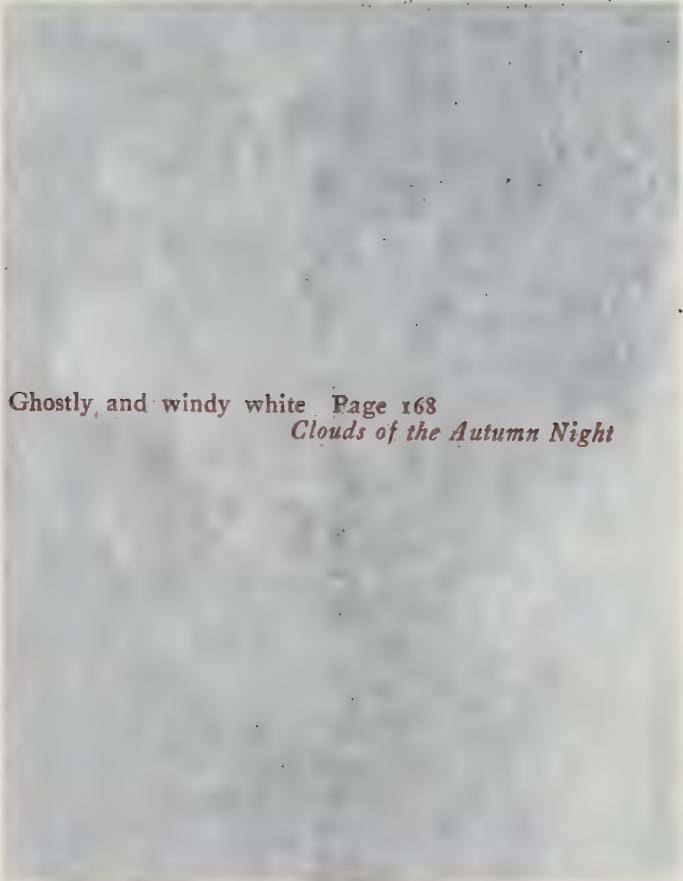
Into the east, where morn  
Sleeps in a shadowy close,  
Shut with a gate of horn,  
Round which the dreams she knows  
Flutter with rose and thorn.

Blow from the west! oh, blow,  
Clouds that the tempest steers!

“CLOUDS OF THE AUTUMN NIGHT”

And with your rain and snow  
Bear of my heart the tears,  
And of my soul the woe.

Into the east then pass,  
Clouds that the night-winds sweep!  
And on her grave's sere grass,  
There where she lies asleep,  
There let them fall, alas!



Ghostly and windy white Page 168  
*Clouds of the Autumn Night*







## THEN AND NOW

When my old heart was young, my dear,  
The earth and heaven were so near  
That in my dreams I oft could hear  
    The steps of airy races;  
In woodlands, where bright waters ran,  
On hills, God's rainbows used to span,  
I followed voices not of man,  
    And smiled in spirit faces.

Now my old heart is old, my sweet,  
No longer earth and heaven meet;  
All life is grown to one dull street  
    Where fact with fancy clashes;  
The voices now that speak to me  
Are prose instead of poetry;  
And in the faces now I see  
    Is less of flame than ashes.

## BY THE TRYSTING-BEECH

Deep in the west a berry-colored bar  
Of sunset gleams; against which one tall fir  
Stands outlined dark; above which — courier  
Of dew and dreams — burns dusk's appointed  
star.  
And flash on flash, as when the elves wage war  
In Goblinland, the fireflies bombard  
The silence; and, like spirits, o'er the sward  
The twilight winds bring fragrance from afar.  
And now, withdrawn into the hill-wood belts,  
A whippoorwill; while, with attendant states  
Of pearl and silver, slow the great moon melts  
Into the night — to show me where *she* waits,—  
Like some slim moonbeam,— by the old beech-  
tree,  
Who keeps her lips, fresh as a flower, for me.

## AFTER LONG GRIEF AND PAIN

There is a place hung o'er of summer boughs  
And dreamy skies wherein the gray hawk sleeps;  
Where waters flow, within whose lazy deeps,  
Like silvery prisms where the sunbeams drowse,  
The minnows twinkle; where the bells of cows  
Tinkle the stillness; and the bob-white keeps  
Calling from meadows where the reaper reaps,  
And children's laughter haunts an old-time  
house:

A place where life wears ever an honest smell  
Of hay and honey, sun and elder-bloom —  
Like some sweet, modest girl — within her hair;  
Where, with our love for comrade, we may dwell  
Far from the city's strife, whose cares con-  
sume —

Oh, take my hand and let me lead you there.

## THE HAUNTED WOODLAND

Here in the golden darkness  
And green night of the woods,  
A flitting form I follow,  
A shadow that eludes —  
Or is it but the phantom  
Of former forest moods ?

The phantom of some fancy  
I knew when I was young,  
And in my dreaming boyhood,  
The wildwood flow'rs among,  
Young face to face with Faëry  
Spoke in no unknown tongue.

Blue were her eyes, and golden  
The nimbus of her hair;  
And scarlet as a flower  
Her mouth that kissed me there;  
That kissed and bade me follow,  
And smiled away my care.

## THE HAUNTED WOODLAND

A magic and a marvel  
Lived in her word and look,  
As down among the blossoms  
She sate me by the brook,  
And read me wonder-legends  
In Nature's Story Book.

Loved fairy-tales forgotten,  
She never reads again,  
Of beautiful enchantments  
That haunt the sun and rain,  
And, in the wind and water,  
Chant a mysterious strain.

And so I search the forest,  
Wherein my spirit feels,  
In stream, or tree, or flower  
Herself she still conceals —  
But now she flies who followed,  
Whom Earth no more reveals.

## COMRADERY

With eyes hand-arched he looks into  
The morning's face, then turns **away**  
With school-boy feet, all wet with dew,  
Out for a holiday.

The hill brook sings; incessant stars,  
Foam-fashioned, on its restless **breast**;  
And where he wades its water-bars  
Its song is happiest.

A comrade of the chinquapin,  
He looks into its knotty **eyes**  
And sees its heart; and, deep **within**,  
Its soul that makes him wise.

The wood-thrush knows and follows **him**,  
Who whistles up the birds and bees;  
And round him all the perfumes swim  
Of woodland loam and trees.

## COMRADERY

Where'er he pass the supple springs'  
Foam-people sing the flowers awake;  
And sappy lips of bark-clad things  
Laugh ripe each fruited brake.

His touch is a companionship;  
His word, an old authority:  
He comes, a lyric on his lip,  
Unstudied Poesy.

## OCCULT

Unto the soul's companionship  
Of things that only seem to be,  
Earth points with magic finger-tip  
    And bids thee see  
How Fancy keeps thee company.

For oft at dawn hast not beheld  
A spirit of prismatic hue  
Blow wide the buds, which night hath  
    swelled?  
    And stain them through  
With heav'n's ethereal gold and blue?

While at her side another went  
With gleams of enigmatic white?  
A spirit who distributes scent,  
    To vale and height,  
In footsteps of the rosy light?

'And oft at dusk hast thou not seen  
The star-fays bring their caravans

## OCCULT

Of dew, and glitter all the green,  
Night's shadow tans,  
With drops the rain-hung cobweb spans?

Nor watched with these the elfins go  
Who tune faint instruments — that sound  
Like that moon-music insects blow? —  
Then haunted ground  
Thou hast not trodden, never found!

## WOOD-WORDS

### I

The spirits of the forest,  
That to the winds give voice —  
I lie the livelong April day  
And wonder what it is they say  
That makes the leaves rejoice.

The spirits of the forest,  
That breathe in bud and bloom —  
I walk within the haw-tree brake  
And wonder how it is they make  
The bubbles of perfume.

The spirits of the forest,  
That dwell in every spring —  
I lean above the brook's bright blue  
And wonder what it is they do  
That makes the water sing.

The spirits of the forest,  
That haunt the sun's green glow —

## WOOD-WORDS

Down fungus ways of fern I steal  
And would surprise what they conceal,  
In dew, that twinkles so.

O spirits of the forest,  
Here are my heart and hand!—  
Oh, send a gleam or glow-worm ray  
To guide my soul the firefly way  
That leads to Fairyland.

## II

The time when dog-tooth violets  
Hold up inverted horns of gold,—  
The elvish cups that Spring upsets  
With dripping feet, when April wets  
The sun-and-shadow-marbled wold,—

Is come. And by each leafing way  
The sorrel drops pale blots of pink;  
And, like an angled star a fay  
Sets on her forehead's pallid day,  
The blossoms of the trillium wink.

Within the vale, by rock and stream,—  
A fragile, fairy porcelain,—  
Blue as a baby's eyes a-dream,

## WOOD-WORDS

The bluets blow; and gleam in gleam  
The sun-shot dogwoods flash with rain.

It is the time to cast off care;  
To make glad intimates of these:—  
The frank-faced sunbeam laughing there:  
The great-heart wind, that bids us share  
The optimism of the trees.

## III

The white ghosts of the flowers,  
The gray ghosts of the trees,  
Rise when the April showers,  
And haunt the wildwood bowers,  
And trail along the breeze:  
The white ghosts of the flowers,  
The gray ghosts of the trees.

Oft in the woodless places  
I feel their dim control;  
The wildflowers' perished faces,  
The great trees' vanished races,  
That meet me soul to soul:  
Oft in the woodless places  
I feel their dim control.

## WOOD-WORDS

### IV

Crab-apple buds, whose bells  
The mouth of April kissed;  
That hang,—like rosy shells  
Around a Naiad's wrist,—  
Pink as dawn-tinted mist.

And paw-paw buds, whose dark  
Deep auburn blossoms shake  
On boughs,—as 'neath the bark  
A dryad's eyes awake,—  
Brown as a midnight lake.

These, with symbolic blooms  
Of wind-flower and wild-phlox,  
I found among the glooms  
Of hill-lost woods and rocks,  
Lairs of the hare and fox.

The beetle in the brush,  
The bird about the creek,  
The bee within the hush,  
And I, whose love was meek,  
Stood still to hear these speak

## WOOD-WORDS

The language that records,  
In flower-syllables,  
The hieroglyphic words  
Of beauty, who enspells  
The world and aye compels.

## THE WIND AT NIGHT

### I

Not till the wildman wind is shrill,  
Howling upon the hill  
In every wolfish tree, whose boisterous boughs,  
Like desperate arms, gesture and beat the night,  
And down huge clouds, in chasms of stormy  
white,  
The frightened moon hurries above the house,  
Shall I lie down; and, deep,—  
Letting the mad wind keep  
Its shouting revel round me,— fall asleep.

### II

Not till its dark halloo is hushed,  
And where wild waters rushed,—  
Like some hoof'd terror underneath its whip  
And spur of foam,— remains  
A ghostly glass, hill-framed; whereover stains  
Of moony mists and rains,  
And stealthy starbeams, still as spectres, slip;  
Shall I — with thoughts that take  
Unto themselves the ache  
Of silence as a sound — from sleep awake.

## 'AIRY TONGUES

### I

There is a song the wet leaves lisp  
When Morn comes down the woodland way;  
And misty as a thistle-wisp  
Her gown gleams, windy gray:  
A song that seems to say,  
“Awake! ’t is day!”

There is a sigh when Day sits down  
Beside the sunlight-lulled lagoon;  
While on her glistening hair and gown  
The rose of rest is strewn:  
A sigh, that seems to croon,  
“Come rest! ’t is noon!”

There is a whisper when the stars,  
Above an evening-purpled height,  
Crown the dead Day with nenuphars  
Of fire, gold and white:  
A voice, that seems t’ invite,  
“Come love! ’t is night!”

## AIRY TONGUES

### II

Before the rathe song-sparrow sings  
Among the haw-trees in the lane,  
And to the wind the locust flings  
Its early clusters fresh with rain;  
Beyond the morning-star, that swings  
Its rose of fire above the spire,  
Between the morning's watchet wings,  
A wild voice rings o'er brooks and boughs —  
“Arouse! arouse!”

Before the first brown owlet cries  
Among the grape-vines on the hill,  
And in the dam with half-shut eyes  
The lilies rock above the mill;  
Beyond the oblong moon, that flies,  
A pearly flower, above the tower,  
Between the twilight's primrose skies,  
A soft voice sighs, from east to west —  
“To rest! to rest!”

## RAIN AND WIND

I hear the hoofs of horses  
Galloping over the hill,  
Galloping on and galloping on,  
When all the night is shrill  
With wind and rain that beats the pane—  
And my soul with awe is still.

For every dripping window  
Their headlong rush makes bound,  
Galloping up, and galloping by,  
Then back again and around,  
Till the gusty roofs ring with their hoofs,  
And the draughty cellars sound.

And then I hear black horsemen  
Hallooing in the night;  
Hallooing and hallooing,  
They ride o'er vale and height,  
And the branches snap and the shutters clap  
With the fury of their flight.

## RAIN AND WIND

Then at each door a horseman,—  
With burly bearded lip  
Hallooing through the keyhole,—  
Pauses with cloak a-drip;  
And the door-knob shakes and the panel  
    quakes  
'Neath the anger of his whip.

All night I hear their gallop,  
And their wild halloo's alarm;  
The tree-tops sound and the vanes go round  
In forest and on farm;  
But never a hair of a thing is there—  
Only the wind and storm.

## UNDER ARCTURUS

### I

“I belt the morn with ribboned mist;  
With baldricked blue I gird the noon,  
And dusk with purple, crimson-kissed,  
White-buckled with the hunter’s-moon.

“These follow me,” the Season says:  
“Mine is the frost-pale hand that packs  
Their scrips, and speeds them on their ways,  
With gipsy gold that weighs their backs.”

### II

A daybreak horn the Autumn blows,  
As with a sun-tanned hand he parts  
Wet boughs whereon the berry glows;  
And at his feet the red fox starts.

The leafy leash that holds his hounds  
Is loosed; and all the noonday hush  
Is startled; and the hillside sounds  
Behind the fox’s bounding brush.

## UNDER ARCTURUS

When red dusk makes the western sky  
A fire-lit window through the firs,  
He stoops to see the red fox die  
Among the chestnut's broken burrs.

Then fanfaree and fanfaree,  
His bugle sounds; the world below  
Grows hushed to hear; and two or three  
Soft stars dream through the afterglow.

## III

Like some black host the shadows fall,  
And blackness camps among the trees;  
Each wildwood road, a Goblin Hall,  
Grows populous with mysteries.

Night comes with brows of ragged storm,  
And limbs of writhen cloud and mist;  
The rain-wind hangs upon his arm  
Like some wild girl who cries unkissed.

By his gaunt hands the leaves are shed  
In headlong troops and nightmare herds;  
And, like a witch who calls the dead,  
The hill-stream whirls with foaming words.

## UNDER ARCTURUS

Then all is sudden silence and  
Dark fear — like his who can not see,  
Yet hears, lost in a haunted land,  
Death rattling on a gallows-tree.

## IV

The days approach again ; the days  
Whose mantles stream, whose sandals drag  
When in the haze by puddled ways  
The gnarled thorn seems a crooked hag.

When rotting orchards reek with rain ;  
And woodlands crumble, leaf and log ;  
And in the drizzling yard again  
The gourd is tagged with points of fog.

Now let me seat my soul among  
The woods' dim dreams, and come in touch  
With melancholy, sad of tongue  
And sweet, who says so much, so much.

## BARE BOUGHS

O heart,— that beat the bird's blithe blood,  
The blithe bird's strain, and understood  
The song it sang to leaf and bud,—  
What dost thou in the wood?

O soul,— that kept the brook's glad flow,  
The glad brook's word to sun and moon,—  
What dost thou here where song lies low,  
Dead as the dreams of June?

Where once was heard a voice of song,  
The hautboys of the mad winds sing;  
Where once a music flowed along,  
The rain's wild bugles ring.

The weedy water frets and ails,  
And moans in many a sunless fall;  
And, o'er the melancholy, trails  
The black crow's eldritch call.

## BARE BOUGHS

Unhappy brook! O withered wood!  
O days, whom death makes comrades of!  
Where are the birds that thrilled the blood  
When Life struck hands with Love?

A song, one soared against the blue;  
A song, one bubbled in the leaves:  
A song, one threw where orchards grew  
Red-appled to the eaves.

The birds are flown; the flowers are dead;  
And sky and earth are bleak and gray;  
The wild winds hang i' the boughs instead,  
And wild leaves strew the way.

## A THRENODY

### I

The rainy smell of a ferny dell,  
Whose shadow no sun-ray flaws,  
When Autumn sits in the wayside weeds  
Telling her beads  
Of haws.

### II

The phantom mist, that is moonbeam-kissed,  
On hills where the trees are thinned,  
When Autumn leans at the oak-root's scarp,  
Touching a harp  
Of wind.

### III

The cricket's chirr 'neath brier and burr,  
By leaf-strewn pools and streams,  
When Autumn stands 'mid the dropping nuts,  
With the book, she shuts,  
Of dreams.

A THRENODY

IV

The gray "Alas" of the days that pass,  
And the hope that says "Adieu,"  
A parting sorrow, a shriveled flower,  
And one ghost's hour  
With you.

## SNOW

The moon, like a round device  
On a shadowy shield of war,  
Hangs white in a heaven of ice  
With a solitary star.

The wind is sunk to a sigh,  
And the waters are steeled with frost;  
And gray in the eastern sky  
The last snow-cloud is lost.

White fields, that are winter-starved;  
Black woods, that are winter-fraught;  
And Earth like a face death-carved  
With the iron of some black thought.

## AN OLD SONG

### I

It's, Oh, for the hills, where the wind 's some one  
With a vagabond foot that follows!  
And a cheer-up hand that he claps upon  
Your arm with the hearty words, "Come on!  
We 'll soon be out of the hollows,  
My heart!  
We 'll soon be out of the hollows!"

### II

It 's, Oh, for the songs, where the hope 's some  
one  
With a renegade foot that doubles!  
And a kindly look that he turns upon  
Your face with the friendly laugh, "Come on!  
We 'll soon be out of the troubles,  
My heart!  
We 'll soon be out of the troubles!"

## BABY MARY

Deep in baby Mary's eyes,  
Baby Mary's sweet blue eyes,  
Dwell the golden memories  
Of the music once her ears  
Heard in far-off Paradise:  
So she has no time for tears,—  
Baby Mary,—  
Listening to the songs she hears.

Soft in baby Mary's face,  
Baby Mary's lovely face,  
If you watch, you, too, may trace  
Dreams her spirit-self hath seen  
In some far-off Eden-place,  
Whence her soul she can not wean,—  
Baby Mary,—  
Dreaming in a world between.

## A SUNSET FANCY

Wide in the west a lake  
Of flame that seems to shake  
As if the Midgard snake  
    Deep down did breathe:  
An isle of purple glow,  
Where rosy rivers flow  
Down peaks of cloudy snow  
    With fire beneath.

And there the Tower-of-Night,  
With windows all a-light,  
Frowns on a burning height,  
    Wherein she sleeps,—  
Young through the years of doom,—  
Veiled with her hair's gold gloom,  
She, the Valkyrie, whom  
    Enchantment keeps.

## THE FEN-FIRE

The misty rain makes dim my face,  
The night's black cloak is o'er me;  
I tread the dripping cypress-place,  
A flickering light before me.

Out of the death of leaves that rot  
And ooze and weedy water,  
My form was breathed to haunt this spot,  
Death's immaterial daughter.

The owl that whoops upon the yew,  
The snake that lairs within it,  
Have seen my wild face flashing blue  
For one fantastic minute.

But should you follow where my eyes  
Like some pale lamp decoy you,  
Beware! lest suddenly I rise  
With love that shall destroy you.

## THE WOOD

Witch-hazel, dogwood, and the maple here;  
And there the oak and hickory;  
Linn, poplar, and the beech-tree, far and near  
As the eased eye can see.

Wild-ginger; wahoo, with its flat balloons;  
And brakes of briers of a twilight green;  
And fox-grapes plumed with summer; and  
strung moons  
Of mandrake flowers between.

Deep gold-green ferns, and mosses green and  
gray,—  
Mats for what naked myth's white feet?—  
And, cool and calm, a cascade far away  
With ever-even beat.

Old logs, made sweet with death; rough bits of  
bark;  
And tangled twig and knotted root;  
And sunshine splashes and great pools of dark;  
And many a wild-bird's flute.

## THE WOOD

Here let me sit until the Indian, Dusk,  
With copper-colored face, comes down;  
Sowing the wildwood with star-fire and musk,  
And shadows blue and brown.

Then side by side with some magician Dream,  
I 'll take the owlet-haunted lane,—  
Half-roofed with vines,—led by a firefly gleam,  
That brings me home again.

## WOOD NOTES

### I

There is a flute that follows me  
From tree to tree:  
A water flute a spirit sets  
To silver lips in waterfalls,  
And through the breath of violets  
A sparkling music calls:—  
“ Hither! halloo! Oh, follow!  
Down leafy hill and hollow,  
Where, through clear swirls,  
With feet like pearls,  
Wade down the blue-eyed country girls.  
Hither! halloo! Oh, follow! ”

### II

There is a pipe that plays to me  
From tree to tree:  
A bramble pipe an elfin holds  
To golden lips in berry brakes,

## WOOD NOTES

And, swinging o'er the elder wolds,  
A flickering music makes:—  
“ Come over! Come over  
The new-mown clover!  
Come over the fresh-cut hay!  
Where, there by the berries,  
With cheeks like cherries,  
And locks with which the warm wind  
    merries,  
Brown girls are hilling the hay,  
    All day!  
Come over the fields and away!—  
Come over! Come over! ”

## HILLS OF THE WEST

Hills of the west, that gird  
Forest and farm,  
Home of the nesting bird,  
Housing from harm,  
When, on your tops, is heard  
Storm.

Hills of the west, that bar  
Belts of the gloam,  
Under the twilight's star,  
Where the mists roam,  
Take ye the wanderer  
Home.

Hills of the west, that dream  
Under the moon,  
Making of wind and stream,  
Late heard and soon,  
Parts of your lives that seem  
Tune.

## HILLS OF THE WEST

Hills of the west, that take  
Silence to ye,  
Be it for sorrow's sake  
Or memory,  
Part of such silence make  
Me.

## THE WIND OF SPRING

The wind that breathes of columbines  
And celandines that crowd the rocks;  
That shakes the balsam of the pines  
With music from his airy locks,  
Stops at my city door and knocks.

He calls me far a-forest, where  
The twin-leaf and the blood-root bloom;  
And, circled by the amber air,  
Life sits with beauty and perfume  
Weaving the new web of her loom.

He calls me where the waters run  
Through fronding fern where wades the hern;  
And, sparkling in the equal sun,  
Song leans beside her brimming urn,  
And dreams the dreams that love shall learn.

The wind has summoned, and I go:  
To con God's meaning in each line  
The wildflow'r's write; and, walking slow,  
God's purpose, of which song is sign,—  
The wind's great, gusty hand in mine.

## THE WILLOW BOTTOM

Lush green the grass that grows between  
The willows of the bottom-land;  
Edged by the careless water, tall and green  
The brown-topped cat-tails stand.

The cows come gently here to browse,  
Slow through the great-leafed sycamores:  
You hear a dog bark from a low-roofed house  
With cedars round its doors.

Then all is quiet as the wings  
Of the one buzzard floating there:  
Anon a woman's high-pitched voice that sings  
An old camp-meeting air.

A cock that flaps and crows; and then—  
Heard drowsy through the rustling corn—  
A flutter, and the cackling of a hen  
Within a hay-sweet barn.

## THE WILLOW BOTTOM

How still again! no water stirs:  
No wind is heard: although the weeds  
Are waved a little: and from silk-filled burrs  
Drift by a few soft seeds.

So drugged with dreams the place, that you  
Expect to see her gliding by,—  
Hummed round of bees, through blossoms spill-  
ing dew,—  
The Spirit of July.

## THE RED-BIRD

Red clouds and reddest flowers,  
And now two redder wings  
Swim through the rosy hours;  
Red wings among the flowers;  
And now the red-bird sings.

God makes the red clouds ripples  
Of flame that seem to split  
In rubies and in dripples  
Of rose where rills and ripples  
The singing flame that lit.

Red clouds of sundered splendor;  
God whispered one small word,  
Rich, sweet, and wild and tender—  
Straight, in the vibrant splendor,  
The word became a bird.

He flies beneath the garnet  
Of clouds that flame and float,—  
When summer hears the hornet  
Hum round the plum, turned garnet,—  
Heaven's music in his throat.

## CLEARING

Before the wind, with rain-drowned stocks,  
The pleated, crimson hollyhocks  
Are bending;  
And, smouldering in the breaking brown,  
Above the hills that rim the town,  
The day is ending.

The air is heavy with the damp;  
And, one by one, each cottage lamp  
Is lighted;  
Infrequent passers of the street  
Stroll on or stop to talk or greet,  
Benighted.

I look beyond my city yard,  
And watch the white moon struggling hard,  
Cloud-buried;  
The wind is driving toward the east,  
A wreck of pearl, all cracked and creased  
And serried.

## CLEARING

At times the moon, erupting, streaks  
Some long cloud, raised in mountain peaks  
    Of shadow,—  
That, seamed with silver, vein on vein,  
Grows to a far volcano chain  
    Of Eldorado.

The wind, that blows from out the hills,  
Is like a woman's touch that stills  
    A sorrow:  
The moon sits high with many a star  
In the deep calm: and fair and far  
    Abides to-morrow.

## AUTUMN SORROW

Ah me! too soon the Autumn comes  
Among these purple-plaintive hills!  
Too soon among the forest gums  
Premonitory flame she spills,  
Bleak, melancholy flame that kills.

Her white fogs veil the morn, that rims  
With wet the moon-flow'r's elfin moons;  
And, like exhausted starlight, dims  
The last slim lily-disk; and swoons  
With scents of hazy afternoons.

Her gray mists haunt the sunset skies,  
And build the west's cadaverous fire,  
Where Sorrow sits with lonely eyes,  
And hands that wake her ancient lyre,  
Beside the ghost of dead Desire.

## A DARK DAY OF SUMMER

Though Summer walks the world to-day  
With corn-crowned hours for her guard,  
Her thoughts have clad themselves in gray,  
And wait in Autumn's weedy yard.

And where the larkspur and the phlox  
Spread carpets for her feet to pass,  
She stands with sombre, dripping locks  
Bound bleak with fog-washed zinnias.

Sad terra-cotta-colored flowers,  
Whose disks the trickling wet has tinged  
With dingy lustre, like the bowers,  
Flame-flecked with leaves, the frost has singed.

She, with slow feet,—'mid gaunt gold blooms  
Of marigolds her fingers twist,—  
Passes, dim-swathed in Fall's perfumes  
And dreams of sullen rain and mist.

## DAYS AND DAYS

The days that clothed white limbs with heat,  
And rocked the red rose on their breast,  
Have passed with amber-sandaled feet,  
Into the ruby-gated west.

These were the days that filled the heart  
With overflowing riches of  
Life; in whose soul no dream shall start  
But hath its origin in love.

Now come the days gray-huddled in  
The haze; whose foggy footsteps drip;  
Who pin beneath a gypsy chin  
The frosty marigold and hip.—

The days, whose forms fall shadowy  
Athwart the heart; whose misty breath  
Shapes saddest sweets of memory  
Out of the bitterness of death.

## DROUTH IN AUTUMN

Gnarled acorn-oaks against a west  
Of copper, cavernous with fire;  
A wind of frost that gives no rest  
To such lean leaves as haunt the brier,  
And hide the cricket's vibrant wire.

Sere, shivering shocks, and stubble blurred  
With bramble-blots of dull maroon;  
And creekless hills whereon no herd  
Finds pasture, and whereo'er the loon  
Flies, haggard as the rainless moon.

## IN SUMMER

When in dry hollows, hilled with hay,  
The vesper-sparrow sings afar;  
And golden gray dusk dies away  
Beneath the amber evening-star:  
There, where a warm and shadowy arm  
The woodland lays around the farm,  
I'll meet you at the tryst, the tryst!  
And kiss your lips no man hath kissed!  
I'll meet you at the twilight tryst,—  
With a hey and a ho!—  
Sweetheart!  
I'll kiss you at the tryst!

When clover fields smell cool with dew,  
And crickets cry, and roads are still;  
And faint and few the fireflies strew  
The dark where calls the whippoorwill;  
There, in the lane, where sweet again  
The petals of the wild-rose rain,

## IN SUMMER

I'll take in mine your hand, your hand!  
And say the words you 'll understand!  
Your soft hand nestling in my hand,—  
With a hey and a ho!—  
Sweetheart!  
All loving hand in hand!

## IN WINTER

### I

When black frosts pluck the acorns down,  
And in the lane the waters freeze;  
And 'thwart red skies the wild-fowl flies,  
And death sits grimly in the trees;  
When home-lights glitter through the brown  
Of dusk like shaggy eyes,—  
Before the door his feet, sweetheart,  
And two white arms that greet, sweetheart,  
And two white arms that greet.

### II

When ways are drifted with the leaves,  
And winds make music in the thorns;  
And lone and lost above the frost  
The new-moon shows its silver horns;  
When underneath the lamplit eaves  
The opened door is crossed,—  
A happy heart and light, sweetheart,  
And lips that kiss good night, sweetheart,  
And lips that kiss good night.

## ON THE FARM

### I

He sang a song as he sowed the field,  
Sowed the field at break of day:  
“ When the pursed-up leaves are as lips that  
yield  
Balm and balsam, and Spring,— concealed  
In the odorous green,— is so revealed,  
    Halloo and oh!  
    Hallo for the woods and the far away!”

### II

He trilled a song as he mowed the mead,  
Mowed the mead as noon begun:  
“ When the hills are gold with the ripened seed,  
As the sunset stairs of the clouds that lead  
To the sky where Summer knows naught of  
need,  
    Halloo and oh!  
    Hallo for the hills and the harvest sun!”

## ON THE FARM

### III

He hummed a song as he swung the flail,  
Swung the flail in the afternoon:  
“When the idle fields are a wrecker’s tale,  
That the Autumn tells to the twilight pale,  
As the Year turns seaward a crimson sail,  
    Halloo and oh!  
Hallo for the fields and the hunter’s-moon!”

### IV

He whistled a song as he shouldered his axe,  
Shouldered his axe in the evening storm:  
“When the snow of the road shows the rabbit’s  
    tracks,  
And the wind is a whip that the Winter cracks,  
With a herdsman’s cry, o’er the clouds black  
    backs,  
    Halloo and oh!  
Hallo for home and a fire to warm!”

## PATHS

### I

What words of mine can tell the spell  
Of garden ways I know so well?—  
The path that takes me, in the spring,  
Past quince-trees where the bluebirds sing,  
Where peonies are blossoming,  
Unto a porch, wistaria-hung,  
Around whose steps May-lilies blow,  
A fair girl reaches down among,  
Her arm more white than their sweet snow.

### II

What words of mine can tell the spell  
Of garden ways I know so well?—  
Another path that leads me, when  
The summer-time is here again,  
Past hollyhocks that shame the west  
When the red sun has sunk to rest;  
To roses bowering a nest,

## PATHS

A lattice, 'neath which mignonette  
And deep geraniums surge and sough,  
Where, in the twilight, starless yet,  
A fair girl's eyes are stars enough.

## III

What words of mine can tell the spell  
Of garden ways I know so well?—  
A path that takes me, when the days  
Of autumn wrap the hills in haze,  
Beneath the pippin-pelting tree,  
'Mid flitting butterfly and bee;  
Unto a door where, fiery,  
The creeper climbs; and, garnet-hued,  
The cock's-comb and the dahlia flare,  
And in the door, where shades intrude,  
Gleams bright a fair girl's sunbeam hair.

## IV

What words of mine can tell the spell  
Of garden ways I know so well?—  
A path that brings me through the frost  
Of winter, when the moon is tossed  
In clouds; beneath great cedars, weak  
With shaggy snow; past shrubs blown bleak

## PATHS

With shivering leaves ; to eaves that leak  
The tattered ice, whereunder is  
A fire-flickering window-space ;  
And in the light, with lips to kiss,  
A fair girl's welcome-giving face.

## A SONG IN SEASON

### I

When in the wind the vane turns round,  
    And round, and round;  
And in his kennel whines the hound:  
When all the gable eaves are bound  
With icicles of ragged gray,  
    A tattered gray;  
There is little to do, and much to say,  
And you hug your fire and pass the day  
    With a thought of the springtime, dearie.

### II

When late at night the owlet hoots,  
    And hoots, and hoots;  
And wild winds make of keyholes flutes:  
When to the door the goodman's boots  
Stamp through the snow the light strains red,  
    The firelight's red;  
There is nothing to do, and all is said,  
And you quaff your cider and go to bed  
    And dream of the summer, dearie.

A SONG IN SEASON

III

When, nearing dawn, the black cock crows,  
    And crows, and crows;  
And from the barn the milch-cow lows:  
And the milkmaid's cheeks have each a rose,  
And the still skies show a star or two,  
    Or one or two;  
There is little to say, and much to do,  
And the heartier done the happier you,  
    With a song of the winter, dearie.

## BEFORE THE END

How does the Autumn in her mind conclude  
The tragic masque her frosty pencil writes,  
Broad on the pages of the days and nights,  
In burning lines of orchard, wold, and wood?  
What lonelier forms — that at the year's door  
        stood

At spectral wait — with wildly wasted lights  
Shall enter? and with melancholy rites  
Inaugurate their sadder sisterhood? —  
Sorrow, who lifts a signal hand, and slow  
The green leaf fevers, falling ere it dies;  
Regret, whose pale lips summon: and gaunt Woe  
Wakes the wild wind-harps with sonorous sighs;  
And Sleep, who sits with poppied eyes and sees  
The earth and sky grow dream-accessories.

## HOAR-FROST

The frail eidolons of all blossoms Spring,  
Year after year, about the forest tossed,  
The magic touch of the enchanter, Frost,  
Back from the Heaven of the Flow'rs doth  
bring;

Each branch and bush in silence visiting  
With phantom beauty of its blooms long lost:  
Each dead weed bends, white-haunted of its  
ghost,  
Each dead flower stands ghostly with blossom-  
ing.

This is the wonder-legend Nature tells  
To the gray moon and mist a winter's night;  
The fairy-tale which from her fancy wells  
With all the glamour of her soul's delight:  
Before the summoning sorcery of her eyes  
Rising, as might a dream materialize.

## COLD

A mist that froze beneath the moon and shook  
Minutest frosty crystals in the air.

All night the wind was still as lonely Care  
Who sighs before her shivering inglenook.  
The face of Winter wore a crueler look  
Than when he shakes the icicles from his hair,  
And, in the boisterous pauses, lets his stare  
Freeze through the forest, fettering bough and  
brook.

He is the despot now who sits and dreams  
Of desolation and despair, and smiles  
At poverty, who hath no place to rest,  
Who wanders o'er Life's snow-made-pathless  
miles,  
And sees the Home-of-Comfort's window gleams,  
Hugging her rag-wrapped baby to her breast.

## THE WINTER MOON

Deep in the dell I watched her as she rose,  
A face of icy fire, o'er the hills;  
With snow-sad eyes that froze the forest rills,  
And snow-sad feet that bleached the meadow  
snows:

Pale as some young witch who, a-listening, goes  
To her first meeting with the Fiend; whose fears  
Fix demon eyes behind each bush she nears;  
Stops, yet must on, fearful of following foes.  
And so I chased her, startled in the wood  
Like a discovered oread, who flies  
The faun who found her sleeping, each nude  
limb  
Glittering betrayal through the solitude;  
Till in a frosty cloud I saw her swim  
Like a drowned face, a blur beneath the ice.

## THE HILLSIDE GRAVE

Ten-thousand deep the drifted daisies break  
Here at the hill's foot; on its top, the wheat  
Hangs meagre-bearded; and, in vague retreat,  
The wisp-like blooms of the moth-mulleins  
shake.

And where the wild-pink drops a crimson flake,  
And morning-glories, like young lips, make  
sweet

The shadowed hush, low in the honeyed heat,  
The wild-bees hum — as if afraid to wake  
One sleeping here, with no white stone to tell  
If it be youth or maiden. Just the stem  
Of one wild rose, towering o'er brier and weed,  
Where all the day the wild-birds requiem;  
Within whose shade the timid violets spell  
An epitaph, the stars alone can read.

## THE COVERED BRIDGE

There, from its entrance, lost in matted vines,—  
Where in the valley foams a waterfall,—  
Is glimpsed a ruined mill's remaining wall;  
Here, by the road, the black-eyed Susan mines  
Hot brass and bronze; the trumpet-trailer shines  
Red as the plumage of the cardinal.  
Faint from the forest comes the rain-crow's call  
Where dusty Summer dreams among the pines.  
This is the spot where Spring writes wildflower  
verses

In primrose pink, while, drowsing o'er his reins,  
The ploughman, all unnoticed, plods along:  
And where the Autumn opens weedy purses  
Of sleepy silver, while the corn-piled wains  
Rumble the bridge like some deep throat of  
song.

## THE CREEK-ROAD

Calling, the heron flies athwart the blue  
That sleeps above it; reach on rocky reach  
Of water sings by sycamore and beech,  
In whose warm shade bloom lilies not a few.  
It is a page whereon the sun and dew  
Scrawl sparkling words in dawn's delicious  
speech;  
A laboratory where the wood-winds teach,  
Dissect each scent and analyze each hue.  
Not otherwise than beautiful, doth it  
Record the happenings of each summer day;  
Where we may read, as in a catalogue,  
When passed a thresher; when a load of hay;  
Or when a rabbit; or a bird, that lit;  
And now a barefoot truant and his dog.

## ABANDONED

The hornets build in plaster dropping rooms,  
And on its mossy porch the lizard lies;  
Around its chimneys slow the swallow flies,  
And on its roof the locusts snow their blooms.  
Like some sad thought that broods here, old per-  
fumes

Haunt its dim stairs; the cautious zephyr tries  
Each gusty door, like some dead hand, then sighs  
With ghostly lips among the attic glooms.  
And now a heron, now a kingfisher,  
Flits in the willows where the riffle seems  
At each faint fall to hesitate to leap,  
Fluttering the silence with a little stir.  
Here Summer seems a placid face asleep,  
And the near world a figment of her dreams.

## OMENS

Sad on the hills the poppied sunset died.  
Slow as a fungus breaking through the crusts  
Of forest leaves, the waning half-moon thrusts  
Through gray-brown clouds one milky silver  
    side;  
In her vague light the dogwoods, dim-descried,  
Seem dying torches flourished by the gusts;  
The apple-orchards seem the restless dusts  
Of wind-thinned mists upon the hills they hide.  
It is a night of omens whom late May  
Meets, like a wraith, among her train of hours;  
An apparition with appealing eye  
And hesitant foot, that walks a willowed way,  
And, speaking through the fading moon and  
    flowers,  
Bids her prepare her gentle soul to die.

## IMPERFECTION

Not as the eye hath seen shall we behold  
Romance and beauty when we 've passed away;  
That robed the dull facts of the intimate day  
In life's wild raiment of unusual gold:  
Not as the ear hath heard shall we be told,  
Hereafter, myth and legend once that lay  
Warm at the heart of Nature, clothing clay  
In attributes of no material mold.  
These were imperfect of necessity,  
That wrought through imperfection for far ends  
Of perfectness — as calm philosophy,  
Teaching a child, from his high heaven descends  
To earth's familiar things; informingly  
Vesting his thoughts in that it comprehends.

## ARCANA

Earth hath her images of utterance,  
Her hieroglyphic meanings which elude ;  
A symbol language of similitude,  
Into whose secrets science may not glance ;  
In which the Mind-in-Nature doth romance  
In miracles that baffle if pursued —  
No guess shall search them and no thought  
intrude  
Beyond the limits of her sufferance.  
So doth the great Intelligence above  
Hide His own thought's creations ; and attire  
Forms in the dream's ideal, which He dowers  
With immaterial loveliness and love —  
As essences of fragrance and of fire —  
Preaching th' evangels of the stars and flowers.

## FULFILLMENT

There are some souls who may look in on these  
Essential peoples of the earth and air —  
That have the stars and flowers in their care —  
And read their soul-suggestive secracies :  
Heart-intimates and comrades of the trees,  
Who from them learn, what no known schools  
    declare,  
God's knowledge ; and from winds, that, sing-  
    ing, fare,  
God's gospel, filled with mighty harmonies.  
Souls, unto whom the waves impart a word  
Of fuller faith ; the sunset and the dawn  
Preach sermons more inspired even than  
The tongues of Pentecost ; as, distant heard  
In forms of change, through Nature upward  
    drawn,  
God doth address th' immortal part of Man.

## TOO LATE

I looked upon a dead girl's face and heard  
What seemed the voice of Death cry out to me,  
Deep in her heart, all of the agony  
Of her lost dreams, complaining word on  
word:—

How on her soul no soul had touched, or stirred  
Her life's sad depths to rippling melody,  
Or made the imaged longing, there, to be  
The realization of a hope deferred.  
So in her life had Love behaved to her.  
Between the lonely chapters of her years  
And her young eyes making no golden blur  
With god-bright face and hair; who led me to  
Her side at last, and bade me, through my tears,  
With Death's dumb lips, too late, to see and  
know.

## THE WITCH

She gropes and hobbles, where the dropsied  
rocks

Are hairy with the lichens and the twist  
Of knotted wolf's-bane, mumbling in the mist,  
Hawk-nosed and wrinkle-eyed with scrawny  
locks.

At her bent back the moon, slow-sinking, mocks,  
Like some lewd evil whom the Fiend hath kissed;  
Once at her feet the slipping serpent hissed,  
And once the owl called to the forest fox.—  
What Sabbath brew does she intend? What  
root

Now seek for, seal for what satanic spell  
Of incantations and demonic fire? —  
From her rude hut, hill-huddled in the brier,  
What dark Familiar points her sure pursuit,  
There, with gaunt eyes, red with the glow of  
Hell?

## THE SOMNAMBULIST

Oaks and a water. By the water — eyes,  
Ice-green and steadfast as still stars ; and hair  
Yellow as eyes deep in a she-wolf's lair ;  
And limbs — like mist the lightning's flicker  
dyes.

The humped oaks huddle under iron skies ;  
The dry wind whirls the dead leaves every-  
where ;

White on the water falls a vulture-glare  
Of moon, and black the circling raven flies.  
Again the power of this thing hath laid  
Compulsion on me : and I seem to hear  
A sweet voice calling me beyond the gates  
To longed-for love : I come : each forest glade  
Seems reaching out white arms to draw me  
near —

Nearer and nearer to the death that waits.

## OPIUM

*On reading De Quincey's "Confessions of an Opium Eater."*

I seemed to stand before a temple walled  
From shadows and night's unrealities;  
Filled with dark music of dead memories,  
And voices,— lost in darkness,— deep that called.  
I entered. And beneath the dome's high-halled  
Immensity one forced me to my knees  
Before a blackness — throned 'mid semblances  
And spectres — crowned with flames of emerald.  
Then, lo! two shapes that thundered at mine ears  
The names of Horror and Oblivion,—  
Priests of this god,— and bade me die and dream.  
Then, in the heart of Hell, a thousand years  
Meseemed I lay — dead! while the iron stream  
Of Time beat out the seconds, one by one.

## MUSIC AND SLEEP.

These have a life that hath no part in death:  
These circumscribe the soul and make it strong:  
Between the breathing of a dream and song,  
Building a world of beauty in a breath.  
Unto the heart the voice of this one saith  
Ideals, its emotions live among;  
Unto the mind the other speaks a tongue  
Of visions, where the guess,—men christen  
Faith,—  
May face the fact of immortality—  
As may a rose its unembodied scent,  
Or star its own reflected radiance.  
We do not know these save subconsciously,  
To whose mysterious shadows God hath lent  
No certain shape, no certain countenance.

## AMBITION

Now to my lips lift thou some opiate  
Of dull forgetfulness! while in thy gaze  
Still lures the loveless beauty that betrays,  
And in thy mouth the music that is hate.  
No promise more hast thou to make me wait;  
No smile to cozen my sick heart with praise!  
Far, far behind thee stretch laborious days,  
And far before thee, labors soon and late.  
Thine is the fen-fire that we deem a star,  
Flying before us, ever fugitive,  
Thy mocking policy still holds afar:  
And thine the voice to which our longings give  
Hope's siren face, that speaks us sweet and fair,  
Only at last to whelm us with despair.

## DESPONDENCY

Not all the bravery that day puts on  
Of gold and azure, ardent or austere,  
Shall ease my soul of sorrow; grief, more dear  
Than all the joy that heavenly hope may don.  
Far up the skies the rumor of the dawn  
May run, and eve like some wild torch appear;  
These shall not change the darkness, gathered  
here,  
Of thought that rusts like an old sword undrawn.  
Oh, for a place far-sunken from the sun!  
A wildwood cave of primitive rocks and moss!  
Where Sleep and Silence — breast to married  
breast —  
Lie with their child, night-eyed Oblivion;  
Where, freed from all the burden of my cross,  
I might forget, I might forget — and rest!

## DESPAIR

Shut in with phantoms of life's hollow hopes,  
And shadows of old sins satiety slew,  
And the young ghosts of the dead dreams love  
knew,  
Out of the day into the night she gropes.  
Behind her, high the silvered summit slopes  
Of hope and faith, she will not turn to view ;  
But towards the cave of heartbreak, harsh of hue,  
She goes, where all the dropsied horror ropes.  
There is a voice of waters in her ears,  
And on her brow a wind that never dies :  
One is the anguish of desired tears ;  
One is the sorrow of unuttered sighs ;  
And, burdened with the immemorial years,  
Downward she goes with never lifted eyes.

## QUATRAINS

### I

#### *Penury*

Above his miser'd embers, gaunt and gray,  
With toil-gnarled limbs he stoops: around his  
hut,  
Want, like a hobbling hag, goes, night and day,  
Trying the windows and the doors tight-shut.

### II

#### *Strategy*

Craft's silent sister and the daughter deep  
Of Contemplation, she, who spreads below  
A hostile tent soft comfort for her foe,  
With eyes of Jael watching till he sleep.

### III

#### *Tempest*

With helms of lightning, glittering in the skies,  
On steeds of thunder, form on cloudy form,  
Terrific beauty in their hair and eyes,  
Sweep down the wild Valkyries of the storm.

## QUATRAINS

### IV

#### *The Locust Blossom*

The spirit Spring, in rainy raiment, met  
The spirit Summer for a moonlit hour:  
Sweet from their greeting kisses, warm and wet,  
Was born the fragrant beauty of this flower.

### V

#### *Melancholy*

With shadowy immortelles of memory  
About her brow, she sits with eyes that look  
Upon the stream of Lethe wearily,  
In hesitant hands Death's partly-opened book.

### VI

#### *Content*

Among the meadows of Life's sad unease—  
In labor still renewing her soul's youth—  
With trust, for patience, and with love, for  
    peace,  
Singing she goes with the calm face of Ruth.

## QUATRAINS

### VII

#### *Life and Death*

Of our own selves God makes a glass, wherein  
Two shades are imaged, passing like a breath:  
And one is Life, whose other name is Sin;  
And one is Love, whose other name is Death.

### VIII

#### *Sorrow*

Death takes her hand and leads her through the  
waste  
Of her own soul, wherein she hears the voice  
Of lost Love's tears, and, famishing, can but  
taste  
The dead-sea fruit of Life's remembered joys.

## A LAST WORD

*Not for myself, but for the sake of Song,  
Would I succeed as others have who gave  
Their lives unto her, shaping sure and strong  
Her lovely limbs that made them god and slave.*

*Not for myself, but for the sake of Art,  
Would I advance beyond the others' best,  
Winning a deeper secret from her heart  
To hang it moonlike 'mid the starry rest.*



**NATURE POEMS  
(SECOND SERIES)**



## FOREWORD

*In the first rare Spring of song,  
In my heart's young hours,  
In my youth 't was thus I sang,  
Choosing 'mid the flowers:—*

*“Fair the Dandelion is,  
But for me too lowly;  
And the winsome Violet  
Is, forsooth, too holy.  
‘But the Touch-me-not?’—Go to!  
What! a face that’s speckled  
Like a common milking-maid’s,  
Whom the sun hath freckled.  
Then the Wild-Rose is a flirt;  
And the Trillium-Lily,  
In her spotless gown, ’s a prude,  
Sanctified and silly.  
By her cap the Columbine,  
To my mind, ’s too merry—  
Gossips, I would sooner woo  
Some plebeian Berry.*

## FOREWORD

*And the shy Anemone —  
Well, her face shows sorrow;  
Pale, goodsooth! alive to-day,  
Dead and gone to-morrow.  
Then that bold-eyed, buxom wench,  
Big and blond and lazy,—  
She 's been chosen over oft! —  
Sirs, I mean the Daisy.  
Pleasant persons are they all,  
And their virtues many;  
Faith! I know but good of each,  
And naught ill of any.  
But I choose a May-Apple;  
She shall be my Lady;  
Blooming, hidden and refined,  
Sweet in places shady.”*

*In my youth 't was thus I sang,  
In my heart's young hours,  
In the first rare Spring of song,  
Choosing 'mid the flowers.  
So I hesitated when  
Time alone was reckoned  
By the hours that Fancy smiled,  
Love and Beauty beckoned.  
Hard it was for me to choose  
From the flowers that flattered;*

## FOREWORD

*And the blossom that I chose  
Soon lay dead and scattered.  
Hard I found it then, ah me!  
Hard I found the choosing;  
Harder, harder since I 've found,  
All too hard, the losing.  
Haply had I chosen then  
From the weeds that tangle  
Wayside, woodland, and the wall  
Of my garden's angle,  
I had chosen better, yea,  
For these later hours —  
Longer live the weeds, and oft  
Sweeter are than flowers.*



## WEEDS BY THE WALL



## THE CRICKET

### I

First of the insect choir, in the spring  
We hear his faint voice fluttering in the grass,  
Beneath some blossom's rosy covering,  
Or frond of fern, upon a wildwood pass.  
When in the marsh, in clamorous orchestras,  
The shrill hylodes pipe; when, in the haw's  
Bee-swarming blooms, or tasseling sassafras,  
Sweet threads of silvery song the sparrow draws,  
Bow-like, athwart the vibrant atmosphere,—  
Like some dim dream low-breathed in slum-  
ber's ear,—  
We hear his *Cheer, cheer, cheer.*

### II

All summer long the mellowing meadows thrill  
To his blithe music. Be it day or night,  
Close gossip of the grass, on field and hill  
He serenades the silence with delight:

## THE CRICKET

Silence, that hears the melon slowly split  
With ripeness; and the plump peach, hornet-bit,  
    Loosen and fall; and everywhere the white,  
Warm, silk-like stir of leafy lights that flit  
    As breezes blow; above which, loudly clear,—  
Like joy who sings of life and has no fear,—  
    We hear his *Cheer, cheer, cheer.*

## III

Then in the autumn, by the waterside,  
Leaf-huddled; or along the weed-grown walks,  
He dirges low the flowers that have died,  
    Or with their ghosts holds solitary talks.  
Lover of warmth, all day above the click  
And crunching of the sorghum-press, through  
    thick  
Sweet steam of juice; all night when, white  
    as chalk,  
The hunter's-moon hangs o'er the rustling rick,  
    Within the barn 'mid munching cow and  
    steer,—  
Soft as a memory the heart holds dear,—  
    We hear his *Cheer, cheer, cheer.*

THE CRICKET

IV

Kinsman and cousin of the Faëry Race,  
All winter long he sets his sober mirth,—  
That brings good-luck to many a fireplace,—  
To folk-lore song and saga of the hearth.  
Between the back-log's bluster and the slim  
High twittering of the kettle,— sounds that  
hymn  
Home-comforts,— when, outside, the starless  
earth  
Is icicled in every laden limb,—  
Defying frost and all the sad and sere,—  
Like love that dies not and is always near,—  
We hear his *Cheer, cheer, cheer.*

## THE TREE TOAD

### I

Secluded, solitary on some underbough  
Or cradled in a leaf, 'mid glimmering light,  
Like Puck thou crouchest: Haply watching how  
The slow toadstool comes bulging, moony  
white,  
Through loosening loam; or how, against the  
night,  
The glow-worm gathers silver to endow  
The darkness with; or how the dew conspires  
To hang at dusk with lamps of chilly fires  
Each blade that shrivels now.

### II

O vague confederate of the whippoorwill,  
Of owl and cricket and the katydid!  
Thou gatherest up the silence in one shrill  
Vibrating note and send'st it where, half hid  
In cedars, twilight sleeps — each azure lid

## THE TREE TOAD

Drooping a line of golden eyeball still.—  
Afar, yet near, I hear thy dewy voice  
Within the Garden of the Hours apoise  
On dusk's deep daffodil.

### III

Minstrel of moisture! silent when high noon  
Shows her tanned face among the thirsting  
clover  
And parching meadows, thy tenebrious tune  
Wakes with the dew or when the rain is over.  
Thou troubadour of wetness and damp lover  
Of all cool things! admitted comrade boon  
Of twilight's hush, and little intimate  
Of eve's first fluttering star and delicate  
Round rim of rainy moon!

### IV

Art trumpeter of Dwarfland? does thy horn  
Inform the gnomes and goblins of the hour  
When they may gambol under haw and thorn,  
Straddling each winking web and twinkling  
flower?  
Or bell-ringer of Elfland? whose tall tower  
The liriodendron is? from whence is borne  
The elfin music of thy bell's deep bass,  
To summon Fairies to their starlit maze,  
To summon them or warn.

## THE SCREECH-OWL

### I

When, one by one, the stars have trembled  
through  
Eve's shadowy hues of violet, rose, and fire —  
As on a pansy-bloom the limpid dew  
Orbs its bright beads; — and, one by one, the  
choir  
Of insects wakes on nodding bush and brier:  
Then through the woods — where wandering  
winds pursue  
A ceaseless whisper — like an eery lyre  
Struck in the Erl-king's halls, where ghosts and  
dreams  
Hold revelry, your goblin music screams,  
Shivering and strange as some strange thought  
come true.

### II

Brown as the agaric that frills dead trees,  
Or those fantastic fungi of the woods  
That crowd the dampness — are you kin to these

## THE SCREECH-OWL

In some mysterious way that still eludes  
My fancy? you, who haunt the solitudes  
With hag-like wailings? voice, that seems to  
freeze  
Out of the darkness,— like the scent which  
broods,  
Rank and rain-sodden, over autumn nooks,—  
That, to the mind, might well suggest such looks,  
Ghastly and gray, as pale clairvoyance sees.

## III

You people night with weirdness: lone and drear,  
Beneath the stars, you cry your wizard runes;  
And in the haggard silence, filled with fear,  
Your shuddering hoot seems some wild grief  
that croons  
Mockery and terror; or,— beneath the moon's  
Cloud-hurrying glimmer,— to the startled ear,  
Crazed, madman snatches of old, perished  
tunes,  
The witless wit of outcast Edgar there  
In the wild night; or, wan with all despair,  
The mirthless laughter of the Fool in Lear.

## THE CHIPMUNK

### I

He makes a roadway of the crumbling fence,  
Or on the fallen tree,— brown as a leaf  
Fall stripes with russet,— gambols down the  
dense  
Green twilight of the woods. We see not whence  
He comes, nor whither —'t is a time too  
brief! —  
He vanishes ; — swift carrier of some Fay,  
Some pixy steed that haunts our child-be-  
lief —  
A goblin glimpse from woodland way to way.

### II

What harlequin mood of nature qualified  
Him so with happiness? and limbed him with  
Such young activity as winds, that ride  
The ripples, have, that dance on every side?  
As sunbeams know, that urge the sap and  
pith

## THE CHIPMUNK

Through hearts of trees? yet made him to de-  
light,  
Gnome-like, in darkness,— like a moonlight  
myth,—  
Lairing in labyrinths of the under night.

### III

Here, by a rock, beneath the moss, a hole  
Leads to his home, the den wherein he sleeps;  
Lulled by near noises of the cautious mole  
Tunnelling its mine — like some ungainly Troll  
— Or by the tireless cricket there that keeps  
Picking its drowsy and monotonous lute;  
Or slower sounds of grass that creeps and  
creeps,  
And trees unrolling mighty root on root.

### IV

Such is the music of his sleeping hours.  
Day hath another — 't is a melody  
He trips to, made by the assembled flowers,  
And light and fragrance laughing 'mid the bow-  
ers,  
And ripeness busy with the acorn-tree.  
Such strains, perhaps, as filled with mute  
amaze —  
The silent music of Earth's ecstasy —  
The Satyr's soul, the Faun of classic days.

## THE WILD IRIS

That day we wandered 'mid the hills,— so  
lone

Clouds are not lonelier,— the forest lay  
In emerald darkness round us. Many a  
stone

And gnarly root, gray-mossed, made wild  
our way:

And many a bird the glimmering light along  
Showered the golden bubbles of its song.

Then in the valley, where the brook went by,  
Silvering the ledges that it rippled from,—  
An isolated slip of fallen sky,  
Epitomizing heaven in its sum,—  
An iris bloomed — blue, as if, flower-dis-  
guised,  
The gaze of Spring had there materialized.

I have forgotten many things since then —  
Much beauty and much happiness and  
grief;

## THE WILD IRIS

And toiled and dreamed among my fellow-men,

Rejoicing in the knowledge life is brief.  
" 'T is winter now," so says each barren bough;

And face and hair proclaim 't is winter now.

I would forget the gladness of that spring!

I would forget that day when she and I,  
Between the bird-song and the blossoming,

Went hand in hand beneath the soft  
spring sky! —

Much is forgotten, yea — and yet, and yet,  
The things we would we never can forget. —

Nor I how May then minted treasures  
Of crowfoot gold; and molded out of  
light

The sorrel's cups, whose elfin chalices  
Of limpid spar were streaked with rosy  
white.

Nor all the stars of twinkling spiderwort,  
And mandrake moons with which her brows  
were girt.

But most of all, yea, it were well for me,  
Me and my heart, that I forgot that  
flower,

## THE WILD IRIS

The blue wild-iris, azure fleur-de-lis,  
That she and I together found that hour.  
Its recollection can but emphasize  
The pain of loss, mindful of her eyes.

## THE PATH BY THE CREEK

There is a path that leads  
Through purple ironweeds,  
By button-bush and mallow  
    Along a creek ;  
A path that wildflowers hallow,  
    That wild-birds seek ;  
Roofed thick with eglantine  
And grape and trumpet-vine.

This side, the blackberries sweet  
Glow cobalt in the heat ;  
That side, a creamy yellow,  
    In summer-time  
The pawpaws slowly mellow :  
    And autumn's prime  
Strews red the Chickasaw,  
Persimmon brown and haw.

The glittering dragon-fly,  
A wingéd gem, goes by ;  
And tawny wasp and hornet  
    Make drowsy drone ;

## THE PATH BY THE CREEK

The beetle, like a garnet,  
    Basks on the stone;  
And butterflies float there,  
    Spangling with gold the air.

Here the brown thrashers hide,  
    And chat and cat-bird chide;  
The blue kingfisher houses  
    Above the stream,  
And here the heron drowses,  
    Lost in his dream;  
The vireo's flitting note  
    Makes woodlands more remote.

And now a cow's slow bell  
    Tinkles from dale to dell;  
Where breeze-dropped petals winnow  
    From blossomy limbs  
On waters, where the minnow,  
    Faint-twinkling, swims;  
Where, in the root-arched shade,  
    Slim prisms of light are laid.

When in the tangled thorn  
    The new-moon hangs a horn,  
Or, 'mid the sunset's islands,  
    Guides her canoe,

## THE PATH BY THE CREEK

The brown owl in the silence  
Calls, and the dew  
Beads glimmering orbs of damp,  
Each one a glow-worm lamp.

Then when the night is still  
Here sings the whippoorwill;  
And stealthy sounds of crickets,  
And winds that pass,  
Whispering, through bramble thickets  
Along the grass,  
Faint with warm scents of hay,  
Seem feet of dreams astray.

And where the water shines  
Dark through tree-twisted vines,  
Some water-spirit, dreaming,  
Braids in her hair  
A star's reflection; seeming  
A jewel there;  
While all the sweet night long  
Ripples her quiet song. . . .

Would I could imitate,  
O path, thy happy state!  
Making my life all beauty,  
All bloom and beam;

## THE PATH BY THE CREEK

Knowing no other duty  
But just to dream,  
And far from pain and woe  
Lead feet that come and go.

Leading to calm content,  
O'er ways the Master went,  
Through lowly things and humble,  
To peace and love ;  
Teaching the lives that stumble  
To look above,  
Forget the world of toil  
And all its mad turmoil.

## ALONG THE STREAM

Where the violet shadows brood  
Under cottonwoods and beeches,  
Through whose leaves the restless reaches  
Of the river glance, I 've stood,  
While the red-bird and the thrush  
Set to song the morning hush.

There,— when wakening woods encroach  
On the shadowy winding waters,  
And the bluets, April's daughters,  
At the darling Spring's approach,  
Star their myriads through the trees,—  
All the land is one with peace.

Under some imposing cliff,  
That, with bush and tree and boulder,  
Thrusters a gray, gigantic shoulder  
O'er the stream, I 've oared a skiff,  
While great clouds of iceberg hue  
Lounged along the noonday blue.

## ALONG THE STREAM

There,— when harvest heights impend  
Over shores of rippling summer,  
And to greet the fair new-comer,—  
June,— the wildrose thickets bend  
In a million blossoms dressed,—  
All the land is one with rest.

On some rock, where gaunt the oak  
Reddens and the sombre cedar  
Darkens, like a sachem leader,  
I have lain and watched the smoke  
Of the steamboat, far-away,  
Trailed along the dying day.

There,— when margin waves reflect  
Autumn colors, gay and sober,  
And the Indian-girl, October,  
Wampum-like in berries decked,  
Leans above the leaf-strewn streams,—  
All the land is one with dreams.

Through the bottoms where,— out-tossed  
By the wind's wild hands,— ashiver  
Bend the willows o'er the river,  
I have walked in sleet and frost,  
While beneath the cold round moon,  
Frozen, gleamed the long lagoon.

### ALONG THE STREAM

There,— when leafless woods uplift  
Spectral arms the storm-blasts splinter,  
And the hoary trapper, Winter,  
Builds his camp of ice and drift,  
With his snow-pelets furred and shod,—  
All the land is one with God.

## VOICES

When blood-root blooms and trillium flowers  
    Unclasp their stars to sun and rain,  
My heart strikes hands with winds and showers  
    And wanders in the woods again.

O urging impulse, born of spring!  
    That makes glad April of my soul,  
No bird, however wild of wing,  
    Is more impatient of control.

Impetuous of pulse it beats  
    Within my blood and bears me hence;  
Above the housetops and the streets  
    I hear its happy eloquence.

It tells me all that I would know,  
    Of birds and buds, of blooms and bees;  
I seem to hear the blossoms blow,  
    And leaves unfolding on the trees.

## VOICES

I seem to hear the bluebells ring  
Faint purple peals of perfume; and  
The honey-throated poppies fling  
Their golden laughter o'er the land.

It calls to me; it sings to me;  
I hear its far voice night and day;  
I can not choose but go when tree  
And flower clamor, "Come away!"

## THE ROAD HOME

Over the hills as the pewee flies,  
Under the blue of the southern skies ;  
Over the hills where the red-bird wings,  
Like a scarlet blossom, or sits and sings :

Under the shadow of rock and tree,  
Where the warm wind drones with the honey-  
bee ;  
And the tall wild-carrots around you sway  
Their lace-like flowers of cloudy gray :

By the black-cohosh and its pearl-white plume  
A-nod in the woodland's odorous gloom ;  
By the old rail-fence, in the elder's shade,  
That the myriad hosts of the weeds invade :

Where the butterfly-weed, like a coal of fire,  
Blurs orange-red through brush and brier ;  
Where the pennyroyal and mint smell sweet,  
And blackberries tangle the humming heat,

## THE ROAD HOME

The old road leads ; then crosses the creek,  
Where the minnow dartles, a silvery streak ;  
Where the cows wade deep through the blue-  
eyed grass,  
And the flickering dragon-flies gleaming pass.

That road is easy, however long,  
Which wends with beauty as toil with song ;  
And the road we follow shall lead us straight  
Past creek and wood to a farm-house gate.

Past hill and hollow, whence scents are blown  
Of dew-wet clover that scythes have mown ;  
To a house that stands with porches wide  
And gray low roof on the green hill-side.

Colonial, stately ; 'mid shade and shine  
Of the locust tree and the southern pine ;  
With its orchard acres and meadowlands  
Stretched out before it like welcoming hands.

And gardens, where, in the myrrh-sweet June,  
Magnolias blossom with many a moon  
Of fragrance ; and, in the feldspar light  
Of August, roses bloom red and white.

In a woodbine arbor, a perfumed place,  
A slim girl sits with listening face ;

## THE ROAD HOME

Her bonnet by her, a sunbeam lies  
On her lovely hair, in her earnest eyes.

Her eyes, as blue as the distant deeps  
Of the heavens above where the high hawk  
sleeps;  
A book beside her, wherein she read  
Till she saw *him* coming, she heard *his* tread.

Come home at last; come back from the war;  
In his eyes a smile, on his brow a scar:  
To the South come back — who wakes from  
her dream  
To the love and the peace of a new regime.

## DROUTH

### I

The hot sunflowers by the glaring pike  
Lift shields of sultry brass; the teasel tops,  
Pink-thorned, advance with bristling spike on  
spike

Against the furious sunlight. Field and copse  
Are sick with summer: now, with breathless  
stops,

The locusts cymbal; now grasshoppers beat  
Their castanets: and rolled in dust, a team,—  
Like some mean life wrapped in its sorry  
dream,—

An empty wagon rattles through the heat.

### II

Where now the blue, blue flags? the flow'rs  
whose mouths  
Are moist and musky? Where the sweet-  
breathed mint,

## DROUTH

That made the brook-bank herby? Where the  
South's  
Wild morning-glories, rich in hues, that hint  
At coming showers that the rainbows tint?  
Where all the blossoms that the wildwood  
knows?  
The frail oxalis hidden in its leaves;  
The Indian-pipe, pale as a soul that grieves;  
The freckled touch-me-not and forest rose.

## III

Dead! dead! all dead beside the drouth-burnt  
brook,  
Shrouded in moss or in the shriveled grass.  
Where waved their bells,— from which the wild-  
bee shook  
The dew-drop once,— gaunt, in a nightmare  
mass,  
The rank weeds crowd; through which the  
cattle pass,  
Thirsty and lean, seeking some meagre spring,  
Closed in with thorns, on which stray bits of  
wool  
The panting sheep have left, that sought the  
cool,  
From morn till evening wearily wandering.

## DROUTH

### IV

No bird is heard; no throat to whistle awake  
The sleepy hush; to let its music leak  
Fresh, bubble-like, through bloom-roofs of the  
brake:  
Only the green-blue heron, famine-weak,—  
Searching the stale pools of the minnowless  
creek,—  
Utters its call; and then the rain-crow, too,  
False prophet now, croaks to the stagnant air;  
While overhead,— still as if painted there,—  
A buzzard hangs, black on the burning blue.

## THE BROKEN DROUTH

It seemed the listening forest held its breath  
Before some vague and unapparent form  
Of fear, approaching with the wings of death,  
On the impending storm.

Above the hills, big, bellying clouds loomed,  
black  
And ominous; yet silent as the blue  
That pools calm heights of heaven, deepening  
back  
'Twixt clouds of snowdrift hue.

Then instantly, as when a multitude  
Shout riot and war through some tumultuous  
town,  
Innumerable voices swept the wood  
As wild the wind rushed down.

And fierce and few, as when a strong man weeps,  
Great rain-drops dashed the dust; and, over-  
head,  
Ponderous and vast down the prodigious deeps,  
Went slow the thunder's tread.

### THE BROKEN DROUTH

And swift and furious, as when giants fence,  
The lightning foils of tempest went insane;  
Then far and near sonorous Earth grew dense  
With long sweet sweep of rain.

## FEUD

A mile of lane,— hedged high with ironweeds  
And dying daisies,— white with sun, that leads  
Downward into a wood; through which a stream  
    Steals like a shadow; over which is laid  
A bridge of logs, worn deep with many a team,  
    Sunk in the tangled shade.

Far off a wood-dove lifts its lonely cry;  
And in the sleepy silver of the sky  
A gray hawk wheels scarce larger than a hand.—  
    From point to point the road grows worse and  
    worse,  
Until that place is reached where all the land  
    Seems burdened with some curse.

A ragged fence of pickets, warped and sprung,—  
On which the fragments of a gate are hung,—  
Divides a hill, the fox and ground-hog haunt,  
    A wilderness of briers; o'er whose tops  
A battered barn is seen, low-roofed and gaunt,  
    'Mid fields that know no crops.

## FEUD

Fields over which a path, o'erwhelmed with burrs  
And ragweeds, noisy with the grasshoppers,  
Leads,— lost, irresolute as paths the cows  
Wear through the woods,— unto a woodshed;  
then,  
With wrecks of windows, to a huddled house,  
Where men have murdered men.

A house, whose tottering chimney, clay and rock,  
Is seamed and crannied; whose lame door and  
lock  
Are bullet-bored; around which, there and here,  
Are sinister stains.— One dreads to look  
around.—  
The place seems thinking of that time of fear  
And dares not breathe a sound.

Within, is emptiness: the sunlight falls  
On faded journals papering its walls;  
On advertisement chromos, torn with time  
Around a hearth where wasps and spiders  
build.—  
The house is dead: meseems that night of crime  
It, too, was shot and killed.

## UNANOINTED

### I

Upon the Siren-haunted seas, between Fate's  
mythic shores,  
Within a world of moon and mist, where dusk  
and daylight wed,  
I see a phantom galley and its hull is banked  
with oars,  
With ghostly oars that move to song, a song of  
dreams long dead:—

“ Oh, we are sick of rowing here!  
With toil our arms are numb;  
With smiting year on weary year  
Salt-furrows of the foam:  
Our journey's end is never near,  
And will no nearer come—  
Beyond our reach the shores appear  
Of far Elysium.”

## UNANOINTED

### II

Within a land of cataracts and mountains old,  
and sand,  
Beneath whose heavens ruins rise, o'er which  
the stars burn red,  
I see a spectral cavalcade with crucifix in hand  
And shadowy armor march and sing, a song of  
dreams long dead:—

“ Oh, we are weary marching on!  
Our limbs are travel-worn;  
With cross and sword from dawn to dawn  
We wend with raiment torn:  
The leagues to go, the leagues we 've gone  
Are sand and rock and thorn—  
The way is long to Avalon  
Beyond the deeps of morn.”

### III

They are the curs'd! the souls who yearn and  
evermore pursue  
The vision of a vain desire, a splendor far  
ahead;  
To whom God gives the poet's dream without the  
grasp to do,  
The artist's hope without the scope between the  
quick and dead:—

## UNANOINTED

I, too, am weary toiling where  
The winds and waters beat;  
When shall I ease the oar I bear  
And rest my tired feet?  
When will the white moons cease to glare,  
The red suns veil their heat?  
And from the heights blow sweet the air  
Of Love's divine retreat?

## SUNSET AND STORM

Deep with divine tautology,  
The sunset's mighty mystery  
Again has traced the scroll-like west  
With hieroglyphs of burning gold:  
Forever new, forever old,  
Its miracle is manifest.

Time lays the scroll away. And now  
Above the hills a giant brow  
Night lifts of cloud; and from her arm,  
Barbaric black, upon the world,  
With thunder, wind and fire, is hurled  
Her awful argument of storm.

What part, O man, is yours in such?  
Whose awe and wonder are in touch  
With Nature,— speaking rapture to  
Your soul,— yet leaving in your reach  
No human word of thought or speech  
Expressive of the thing you view.

## BEECH BLOOMS

Among the valleys  
The wild oxalis  
Lifts up its chalice  
    Of pink and pearl;  
And, balsam-breathing  
From out their sheathing,  
The myriad wreathing  
    Green leaves uncurl.

The whole world brightens  
With spring, that lightens  
The foot that frightens  
    The building thrush;  
Where water tosses  
On ferns and mosses  
The squirrel crosses  
    The beechen hush.

And vision on vision,—  
Like ships elysian  
On some white mission,—  
    Sails cloud on cloud;

## BEECH BLOOMS

With scents of clover  
The winds brim over,  
And in the cover  
The stream is loud.

'Twixt bloom that blanches  
The orchard branches  
Old farms and ranches  
Gleam in the gloam :  
Through fields for sowing,  
'Mid blossoms blowing,  
The cows come lowing,  
The cows come home.

Where ways are narrow,  
A vesper-sparrow  
Flits like an arrow  
Of living rhyme ;  
The red sun poises,  
And farm-yard noises  
Mix with glad voices  
Of milking-time.

When dusk disposes  
Of all its roses,  
And darkness closes,  
And work is done,

BEECH BLOOMS

A moon's white feather  
In starry weather  
And two together  
Whose hearts are one.

## WORSHIP

### I

The mornings raise  
Voices of gold in the Almighty's praise;  
The sunsets soar  
In choral crimson from far shore to shore:  
Each is a blast,  
Reverberant, of color,— seen as vast  
Concussions,— that the vocal firmament  
In worship sounds o'er every continent.

### II

Not for our ears  
The cosmic music of the rolling spheres,  
That sweeps the skies!  
Music we hear, but only with our eyes.  
For all too weak  
Our mortal frames to bear the words these speak,  
Those detonations that we name the dawn  
And sunset — hues Earth's harmony puts on.

## UNHEARD

All things are wrought of melody,  
    Unheard, yet full of speaking spells ;  
Within the rock, within the tree,  
    A soul of music dwells.

A mute symphonic sense that thrills  
    The silent frame of mortal things ;  
Its heart beats in the ancient hills,  
    And in each flow'r sings.

To harmony all growth is set —  
    Each seed is but a music mote,  
From which each plant, each violet,  
    Evolves its purple note.

Compact of melody, the rose  
    Woos the soft wind with strain on strain  
Of crimson ; and the lily blows  
    Its white bars to the rain.

The trees are pæans ; and the grass  
    One long green fugue beneath the sun —  
Song is their life ; and all shall pass,  
    Shall end, when song is done.

## REINCARNATION

High in the place of outraged Liberty,  
He ruled the world, an emperor and god :  
His iron armies swept the land and sea,  
And conquered nations trembled at his nod.

By him the love that fills man's soul with light,  
And makes a heaven of earth, was crucified ;  
Lust-crowned he lived, yea, lived in God's despite,  
And old in infamies, a king he died.

Justice begins now.— Many centuries  
In some vile body must his soul atone  
As slave, as beggar, loathsome with disease,  
Less than the dog at which we fling a stone.

## ON CHENOWETH'S RUN

I thought of the road through the glen,  
With its hawk's nest high in the pine;  
With its rock, where the fox had his den,  
'Mid tangles of sumach and vine,  
Where she swore to be mine.

I thought of the creek and its banks,  
Now glooming, now gleaming with sun;  
The rustic bridge builded of planks,  
The bridge over Chenoweth's Run,  
Where I wooed her and won.

I thought of the house in the lane,  
With its pinks and its sweet mignonette;  
Its fence, and the gate with its chain,  
Its porch where the roses hung wet,  
Where I kissed her and met.

Then I thought of the family graves,  
Walled rudely with stone, in the West,

## ON CHENOWETH'S RUN

Where the sorrowful cedar-tree waves,  
And the wind is a spirit distressed,  
Where they laid her to rest.

And my soul, overwhelmed with despair,  
Cried out on the city and mart!—  
How I longed, how I longed to be there,  
Away from the struggle and smart,  
By her and my heart.

By her and my heart in the West,—  
Laid sadly together as one;—  
On her grave for a moment to rest,  
Far away from the noise and the sun,  
On Chenoweth's Run.

## REQUIESCAT

The roses mourn for her who sleeps  
    Within the tomb;  
For her each lily-flower weeps  
    Dew and perfume,  
In each neglected flower-bed  
Each blossom droops its lovely head,—  
They miss her touch, they miss her tread,  
    Her face of bloom,  
    Of happy bloom.

The very breezes grieve for her,  
    A lonely grief;  
For her each tree is sorrower,  
    Each blade and leaf.  
The foliage rocks itself and sighs,  
And to its woe the wind replies,—  
They miss her girlish laugh and cries,  
    Whose life was brief,  
    Was all too brief.

## REQUIESCAT

The sunlight, too, seems pale with care,

Or sick with woe;

The memory haunts it of her hair,

Its golden glow.

No more within the bramble-brake

The sleepy bloom is kissed awake —

The sun is sad for her dear sake,

Whose head lies low,

Lies dim and low.

The bird, that sang so sweet, is still

At dusk and dawn;

No more it makes the silence thrill

Of wood and lawn.

In vain the buds, when it is near,

Open each pink and perfumed ear, —

The song it sings she will not hear

Who now is gone,

Is dead and gone.

Ah, well she sleeps who loved them well,

The birds and bowers;

The fair, the young, the lovable,

Who once was ours.

Alas! that loveliness must pass!

Must come to lie beneath the grass!

That youth and joy must fade, alas!

And die like flowers,

Earth's sweetest flowers!

## THE QUEST

### I

First I asked the honey-bee,  
    Busy in the balmy bowers;  
Saying, "Sweetheart, tell it me:  
Have you seen her, honey-bee?  
    She is cousin to the flowers—  
All the sweetness of the south  
In her wild-rose face and mouth."—  
    But the bee passed silently.

### II

Then I asked the forest-bird,  
    Warbling by the woodland waters;  
Saying, "Dearest, have you heard,  
Have you heard her, forest-bird?  
    She is one of Music's daughters—  
Never song so sweet by half  
As the music of her laugh."—  
    But the bird said not a word.

## THE QUEST

### III

Next I asked the evening-sky,  
Hanging out its lamps of fire;  
Saying, "Loved one, passed she by?  
Tell me, tell me, evening-sky!  
She, the star of my desire—  
Sister whom the Pleiads lost,  
And my soul's high pentecost."—  
But the sky made no reply.

### IV

Where is she? ah, where is she?  
She to whom both love and duty  
Bind me, yea, immortally.—  
Where is she? ah, where is she?  
Symbol of the Earth-soul's beauty.  
I have lost her. Help my heart  
Find her! her, who is a part  
Of the pagan soul of me!

## BEFORE THE RAIN

Before the rain, low in the obscure east,  
Weak and morose the moon hung, sickly gray;  
Around its disc the storm mists, cracked and  
creased,  
Wove an enormous web, wherein it lay  
Like some white spider hungry for its prey.  
Vindictive looked the scowling firmament,  
In which each star, that flashed a dagger ray,  
Seemed filled with malice of some dark intent.

The marsh-frog croaked; and underneath the  
stone  
The peevish cricket raised a creaking cry.  
Within the world these sounds were heard alone,  
Save when the ruffian wind swept from the sky,  
Making each tree like some sad spirit sigh;  
Or shook the clumsy beetle from its weed,  
That, in the drowsy darkness, bungling by,  
Sharded the silence with its feverish speed.

### BEFORE THE RAIN

Slowly the tempest gathered. Hours passed  
Before was heard the thunder's sullen drum  
Rumbling night's hollow; and the Earth at last,  
Restless with waiting,— like a woman, dumb  
With doubting of the love that should have  
clomb

Her casement hours ago,— avowed again,  
'Mid protestations, joy that he had come.  
And all night long I heard the Heavens explain.

## AFTER RAIN

Behold the blossom-bosomed Day again,  
With all the star-white Hours in her train,  
Laughs out of pearl-lights through a golden ray,  
That, leaning on the woodland wildness, blends  
A sprinkled amber with the showers that lay  
Their oblong emeralds on the leafy ends.  
Behold her bend with maiden-braided brows  
Above the wildflower, sidewise with its strain  
Of dewy happiness, to kiss again  
Each drop to death ; or, under rainy boughs,  
With fingers, fragrant as the woodland rain,  
Gather the sparkles from the sycamore,  
To set within the core  
Of crimson roses girdling her hips,  
Where each bud dreams and drips.

Smoothing her blue-black hair,— where many a  
tusk  
Of iris flashes,— like the falchions keen  
Of Faery round blue banners of their Queen,—  
Is it a Naiad singing in the dusk,

## AFTER RAIN

That haunts the spring, where all the moss is  
musk

With footsteps of the flowers on the banks?  
Or but a wild-bird voluble with thanks?

Balm for each blade of grass: the Hours prepare  
A festival each weed 's invited to.

Each bee is drunken with the honied air:  
And all the heaven is eloquent with blue.

The wet hay glitters, and the harvester  
Tinkles his scythe,— as twinkling as the dew,—

That shall not spare

Blossom or brier in its sweeping path;

And, ere it cut one swath,  
Rings them they die, and tells them to prepare.

What is the spice that haunts each glen and  
glade?

A Dryad's lips, who slumbers in the shade?

A Faun, who lets the heavy ivy-wreath  
Slip to his thigh as, reaching up, he pulls  
The chestnut blossoms in whole bosomfuls?

A sylvan Spirit, whose sweet mouth doth breathe  
Her viewless presence near us, unafraid?

Or troops of ghosts of blooms, that whitely wade  
The brook? whose wisdom knows no other song  
But that the bird sings where it builds beneath  
The wild-rose and sits singing all day long.

## AFTER RAIN

Oh, let me sit with silence for a space,  
A little while forgetting that fierce part  
Of man that struggles in the toiling mart;  
Where God can look into my heart's own heart  
From unsoled heights made amiable with grace;  
And where the sermons that the old oaks keep  
Can steal into me.— And what better then  
Than, turning to the moss a quiet face,  
To fall asleep? a little while to sleep  
And dream of wiser worlds and wiser men.

## SUNSET CLOUDS

Low clouds, the lightning veins and cleaves,  
Torn from the wilderness of storm,  
Sweep westward like enormous leaves  
O'er field and farm.

And in the west, on burning skies,  
Their wrath is quenched, their hate is hushed,  
And deep their drifted thunder lies  
With splendor flushed.

The black turns gray, the gray turns gold;  
And sea'd in deeps of radiant rose,  
Summits of fire, manifold,  
They now repose.

What dreams they bring! what thoughts reveal!  
That have their source in loveliness,  
Through which the doubts I often feel  
Grow less and less.

Through which I see that other night,  
That cloud called Death, transformed of Love  
To flame, and pointing with its light  
To life above.

## RICHES

What mines the morning heavens unfold!  
What far Alaskas of the skies!  
That, veined with elemental gold,  
Sierra on Sierra rise.

Heap up the gold of all the world,  
The ore that makes men fools and slaves:  
What is it to the gold, cloud-curled,  
That rivers through the sunset's caves.

Search Earth for riches all who will,  
The gold that soils, that turns to dust —  
Mine be the wealth no thief can steal,  
The gold of Beauty naught can rust.

## THE AGE OF GOLD

The clouds that tower in storm, that beat  
Arterial thunder in their veins ;  
The wildflowers lifting, shyly sweet,  
Their perfect faces from the plains,—  
All high, all lowly things of Earth  
For no vague end have had their birth.

Low strips of mist, that mesh the moon  
Above the foaming waterfall ;  
And mountains that God's hand hath hewn,  
And forests where the great winds call,—  
Within the grasp of such as see  
Are parts of a conspiracy ;

To seize the soul with beauty ; hold  
The heart with love : and thus fulfill  
Within ourselves the Age of Gold,  
That never died, and never will,—  
As long as one true nature feels  
The wonders that the world reveals.

## A SONG FOR LABOR

### I

Oh, the morning meads, the dewy meads,  
Where he ploughs and harrows and sows the  
seeds,  
Singing a song of manly deeds,  
In the blossoming springtime weather :  
The heart in his bosom as high as the word  
Said to the sky by the mating bird,  
While the beat of an answering heart is heard,  
His heart and hers together.

### II

Oh, the noonday heights, the sunlit heights,  
Where he stoops to the harvest his keen scythe  
smites,  
Singing a song of the work that requites,  
In the ripening summer weather :  
The soul in his body as light as the sigh  
Of the little cloud-breeze that cools the sky,  
While he hears an answering soul reply,  
His soul and hers together.

A SONG FOR LABOR

III

Oh, the evening vales, the twilight vales,  
Where he labors and sweats to the thud of flails,  
Singing a song of the toil that he hails,

In the fruitful autumn weather:  
In heart and in soul as free from fears  
As the first white star in the sky that appears,  
While the music of life and of love he hears,  
Her life and his together.

## THE LOVE OF LOVES

I have not seen her face, and yet  
She is more sweet than anything  
Of earth — than rose or violet  
That winds of May and sunbeams bring.  
Of all we know, past or to come,  
That beauty holds within its net,  
She is the high compendium:  
And yet —

I have not touched her robe, and still  
She is more dear than lyric words  
And music; or than strains that fill  
The throbbing throats of forest birds.  
Of all we mean by poetry,  
That rules the soul and charms the will,  
She is the deep epitome:  
And still —

She is my world: ah, pity me!  
A dream that flies whom I pursue:

## THE LOVE OF LOVES

Whom all pursue, whoe'er they be,  
Who toil for Art and dare and do.  
The shadow-love for whom they sigh,  
The far ideal affinity,  
For whom they live and gladly die —  
Ah me!

## THREE THINGS

There are three things of Earth  
    That help us more  
Than those of heavenly birth  
    That all implore —  
Than Love or Faith or Hope,  
For which we strive and grope.

The first one is Desire,—  
    Who takes our hand  
And fills our hearts with fire  
    None may withstand ;—  
Through whom we 're lifted far  
Above both moon and star.

The second one is Dream,—  
    Who leads our feet  
By an immortal gleam  
    To visions sweet ;—  
Through whom our forms put on  
Dim attributes of dawn.

### THREE THINGS

The last of these is Toil,—  
Who maketh true,  
Within the world's turmoil  
The other two;—  
Through whom we may behold  
Ourselves with kings enrolled.

## IMMORTELLES

### I

As some warm moment of repose  
In one rich rose  
Sums all the summer's lovely bloom  
And pure perfume —  
So did her soul epitomize  
All hopes that make life wise,  
Who lies before us now with lidded eyes,  
Faith's amaranth of truth  
Crowning her youth.

### II

As some melodious note or strain  
May so contain  
All of sweet music in one chord,  
Or lyric word —  
So did her loving heart suggest  
All dreams that make life blessed,  
Who lies before us now with pulseless breast,  
Love's asphodel of duty  
Crowning her beauty.

## A LULLABY

### I

In her wimple of wind and her slippers of sleep  
The twilight comes like a little goose-girl,  
Hherding her owls with many “ Tu-whoos,”  
Her little brown owls in the forest deep,  
Where dimly she walks in her whispering shoes,  
And gown of glimmering pearl.

Sleep, sleep, little one, sleep :  
This is the road to Rockaby Town.  
Rockaby, lullaby, where dreams are cheap ;  
Here you can buy any dream for a crown.  
Sleep, sleep, little one, sleep ;  
The cradle you lie in is soft and is deep,  
The wagon that takes you to Rockaby Town.  
Now you go up, sweet, now you go down,  
Rockaby, lullaby, now you go down.

## A LULLABY

### II

And after the twilight comes midnight, who  
wears

A mantle of purple so old, so old!  
Who stables the lily-white moon, it is said,  
In a wonderful chamber with violet stairs,  
Up which you can see her come, silent of tread,  
On hoofs of pale silver and gold.

Dream, dream, little one, dream:  
This is the way to Lullaby Land.  
Lullaby, rockaby, where, white as cream,  
Sugar-plum bowers drop sweets in your  
hand.  
Dream, dream, little one, dream;  
The cradle you lie in is tight at each seam,  
The boat that goes sailing to Lullaby Land.  
Over the sea, sweet, over the sand,  
Lullaby, rockaby, over the sand.

### III

The twilight and midnight are lovers, you know,  
And each to the other is true, is true!  
And there on the moon through the heavens they  
ride,

### A LULLABY

With the little brown owls all huddled a-row,  
Through meadows of heaven where, every side,  
Blossom the stars and the dew.

Rest, rest, little one, rest :  
    Rockaby Town is in Lullaby Isle.  
Rockaby, lullaby, set like a nest  
    Deep in the heart of a song and a smile.  
Rest, rest, little one, rest ;  
    The cradle you lie in is warm as my breast,  
    The white bird that bears you to Lullaby  
        Isle.  
Out of the East, sweet, into the West,  
    Rockaby, lullaby, into the West.

## PESTILENCE

High on a throne of noisome ooze and heat,  
'Mid rotting trees of bayou and lagoon,  
Ghastly she sits beneath the skeleton moon,  
A tawny horror coiling at her feet —  
Fever, whose eyes keep watching, serpent-like,  
Until her eyes shall bid him rise and strike.

## MUSINGS

### I

#### *Inspiration*

All who have toiled for Art, who 've won or lost,  
Sat equal priests at her high Pentecost;  
Only the chrism and sacrament of flame,  
Anointing all, inspired not all the same.

### II

#### *Apportionment*

How often in our search for joy below  
Hoping for happiness we chance on woe.

### III

#### *Victory*

They who take courage from their own defeat  
Are victors too, no matter how much beat.

## MUSINGS

### IV

#### *Preparation*

How often hope's fair flower blooms richest  
where  
The soul was fertilized with black despair.

### V

#### *Disillusion*

Those unrequited in their love who die  
Have never drained life's chief illusion dry.

### VI

#### *Success*

Success allures us in the earth and skies :  
We seek to win her, but, too amorous,  
Mocking, she flees us.— Haply, were we wise,  
We should not strive and she would come to us.

### VII

#### *Science*

Miranda-like, above the world she waves  
The wand of Prospero ; and, beautiful,

## MUSINGS

Ariel the airy, Caliban the dull,—  
Lightning and Steam,— are her unwilling slaves.

### VIII

#### *The Universal Wind*

Wild son of Heav'n, with laughter and alarm,  
Now east, now west, now north, now south he  
goes,  
Bearing in one harsh hand dark death and  
storm,  
And in the other, sunshine and a rose.

### IX

#### *Compensation*

Yea, whom He loves the Lord God chasteneth  
With disappointments, so that this side death,  
Through suffering and failure, they know Hell  
To make them worthy in that Heaven to dwell  
Of Love's attainment, where they come to be  
Parts of its beauty and divinity.

### X

#### *Poppies*

Summer met Sleep at sunset,  
Dreaming within the south,—

## MUSINGS

Drugged with his soul's deep slumber,  
Red with her heart's hot drouth,  
These are the drowsy kisses  
She pressed upon his mouth.

### XI

#### *Her Eyes and Mouth*

There is no Paradise like that which lies  
Deep in the heavens of her azure eyes:  
There is no Eden here on Earth that glows  
Like that which smiles rich in her mouth's red  
rose.

### XII

#### *Her Soul*

To me not only does her soul suggest  
Palms and the peace of tropic shore and wood,  
But, oceaned far beyond the golden West,  
The Fortunate Islands of true Womanhood.

### XIII

#### *Her Face*

The gladness of our Southern spring; the grace  
Of summer; and the dreaminess of fall  
Are parts of her sweet nature.— Such a face  
Was Ruth's, methinks, divinely spiritual.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE LILIES

My soul and I went walking  
Beneath the moon of spring;  
The lilies pale were talking,  
We heard them murmuring.

From dimly moonlit places  
They thrust long throats of white,  
And lifted fairy faces  
Of fragrant snow and light.

Their language was an essence,  
Yet clear as any bird's;  
And from it grew a presence,  
As music grows from words.

A spirit born of silence  
And chastity and dew  
Among Elysian islands  
Were not more white to view.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE LILIES

A spirit born of fire  
And holiness and snow,  
Within the Heaven's desire,  
Were not more pure to know.

He smiled among them, lifting  
Pale hands of prayer and peace —  
And through the moonlight, drifting,  
Came words to me like these : —

“ We are His lilies, lilies,  
Whose praises here we sing !  
We are the lilies, lilies  
Of Christ our Lord and King ! ”

## ANTHEM OF DAWN

### I

Then up the orient heights to the zenith that balanced the crescent,—  
Up and far up and over,— the heaven grew eruptive,  
Vibrant with rose and with ruby from hands of  
the harpist Dawn,  
Smiting symphonic fire on the firmament's barbiton;  
And the East was a priest who adored with offerings of gold and of gems,  
And a wonderful carpet unrolled for the inaccessible hemis  
Of the glittering robes of her limbs; that, lily and amethyst,  
Swept glorying on and on through temples of cloud and mist.

## ANTHEM OF DAWN

### II

Then out of the splendor and richness, that  
burned like a magic stone,  
The torrent suffusion that deepened and dazzled  
and broadened and shone,  
The pomp and the pageant of color, triumphal  
procession of glare,  
The sun, like a king in armor, breathing splendor  
from feet to hair,  
Stood forth with majesty girdled, as a hero who  
towers afar  
Where the bannered gates are bristling hells and  
the walls are roaring war:  
And broad on the back of the world, like a  
Cherubin's fiery blade,  
The effulgent gaze of his aspect fell in glittering  
accolade.

### III

Then billowing blue, like an ocean, rolled from  
the shores of dawn to even:  
And the stars like rafts went down; and the  
moon, like a ghost-ship driven,  
A feather of foam, from port to port of the  
cloud-built isles that dotted,

### ANTHEM OF DAWN

With pearl and cameo, bays of the day,— her  
    canvas webbed and rotted,—  
Lay lost in the gulf of heaven; while over her  
    mixed and melted  
The beautiful children of Morn, whose bodies  
    are opal-belted;  
The beautiful daughters of Dawn, who, over and  
    under and after  
The rivered radiance wrestled; and rainbowed  
    heaven with laughter  
Of halcyon sapphire.— O Dawn! thou visible  
    mirth,  
Thou hallelujah of heaven! hosanna of Earth!

## AT THE LANE'S END

### I

No more to strip the roses from  
The rose-sprays of her porch's place! —  
I dreamed last night that I was home  
Kissing a rose — her face.

I must have smiled in sleep — who knows? —  
The rose-aroma filled the lane;  
I saw her white hand's lifted rose  
That welcomed home again.

And yet when I awoke — so wan,  
My old face wet with icy tears —  
Somehow, it seems, she was not gone,  
Though dead now thirty years.

### II

The clouds roll up and the clouds roll down  
Over the roofs of the little town;

### AT THE LANE'S END

Out in the hills, where the pike winds by  
Fields of clover and bottoms of rye,  
You will hear no sound but the barking cough  
Of the striped chipmunk where the lane leads off ;  
You will hear no bird but the sapsuckér  
Far off in the forest,— that seems to purr,  
As the warm wind fondles its top, grown hot,  
Like the docile back of an ocelot :  
You will see no thing but the shine and shade  
Of briars that climb and of weeds that wade  
The glittering creeks of the heat, that fills  
The dusty road and the red-keel hills.—  
And all day long in the pennyroyal  
The grasshoppers at their anvils toil ;  
Thick click of their tireless hammers thrum,  
And the wheezy belts of their bellows hum ;  
Tinkers who solder the silence and heat  
To make the loneliness more complete.  
Around old rails where the blackberries  
Are reddening ripe, and the bumblebees  
Are a drowsy rustle of Summer's skirts,  
And the bob-white's wing is the fan she flirts ;  
Under the hill, through the ironweeds  
And ox-eyed daisies and milkweeds, leads  
The path forgotten of all but one.  
Where elder-bushes are sick with sun,  
And wild raspberries branch big, blue veins

## AT THE LANE'S END

O'er the face of the rock where the old spring  
    rains  
Its sparkling splinters of molten spar  
On the gravel bed where the tadpoles are,—  
You will find the pales of a fallen fence,  
And the tangled orchard and vineyard, dense  
With the weedy neglect of thirty years.  
The garden there,— where the soft sky clears  
Like an old sweet face that has dried its tears ;—  
The garden-plot where the cabbage grew  
And the pompous pumpkin ; and beans that blew  
Balloons of white by the melon patch ;  
Maize ; and tomatoes that seemed to catch  
Oblong amber and agate balls  
Globed of the sun in the frosty falls :  
Long rows of currants and gooseberries,  
And the balsam-gourd with its honey-bees.  
And here was a nook for the princess-plumes,  
The snapdragons and the poppy-blooms,  
Quaint sweet-williams and pansy-flowers,  
And the morning-glories' bewildered bowers,  
Tipping their cornucopias up  
For the humming-birds that came to sup.  
And over it all was the Sabbath peace  
Of the land whose lap was the love of these ;  
And the old log-house where my innocence died,  
With my boyhood buried side by side.

### AT THE LANE'S END

Shall a man with a face as withered and gray  
As the wasp-nest stowed in a loft away,—  
Where the hornets haunt and the mortar drops  
From the loosened logs of the clapboard tops;—  
Whom vice has aged as the rotting rooms  
The rain where memories haunt the glooms;  
'A hitch in his joints like the rheum that gnars  
In the rasping hinge of the door that jars;  
'A harsh, cracked throat like the old stone flue  
Where the swallows build the summer  
through;—

Shall a man, I say, with the spider sins  
That the long years spin in the outs and ins  
Of his soul, returning to see once more  
His boyhood's home, where his life was poor  
With toil and tears and their fretfulness,  
But rich with health and the hopes that bless  
The unsoiled wealth of a vigorous youth;  
Shall he not take comfort and know the truth  
In its threadbare raiment of falsehood? — Yea!  
In his crumbled past he shall kneel and pray,  
Like a pilgrim come to the shrine again  
Of the homely saints that shall soothe his pain,  
And arise and depart made clean again!

## AT THE LANE'S END

### III

Years of care can not efface  
    Visions of the hills and trees  
Closing in its dam and race;  
    Nor the mile-long memories  
Of the mill-stream's lovely place.

How the sunsets used to stain  
    Mirrors of the waters lying  
Under eaves made dark with rain!  
    Where the red-bird, westward flying,  
Lit to try its song again.

Dingles, hills and woods, and springs,  
    Where we came in calm and storm,  
Swinging in the grapevine swings,  
    Wading where the rocks were warm,  
With our fishing-nets and strings.

Here the road plunged down the hill,  
    Under ash and chinquapin,—  
Where the grasshoppers would drill  
    Ears of silence with their din,—  
To the willow-girdled mill.

There the path beyond the ford  
    Takes the woodside; just below

## AT THE LANE'S END

Shallows that the lilies sword,  
Where the scarlet blossoms blow  
Of the trumpet-vine and gourd.

Summer winds, that sink with heat,  
On the pelted waters winnow  
Moony petals that repeat  
Crescents, where the startled minnow  
Beats a glittering retreat.

Summer winds that bear the scent  
Of the ironweed and mint,  
Weary with sweet freight and spent,  
On the deeper pools imprint  
Stumbling steps, whose ripples dent.

Summer winds, that split the husk  
Of the peach and nectarine,  
Trail along the amber dusk  
Hazy skirts of gold and green,  
Spilling balms of dew and musk.

Where with balls of bursting juice  
Summer sees the red wild-plum  
Strew the gravel; ripened loose,  
Autumn hears the pawpaw drum  
Plumpness on the rocks that bruise:

## AT THE LANE'S END

There we found the water-beech,  
One forgotten August noon,  
With a hornet-nest in reach,—  
Like a fairyland balloon,  
Full of bustling fairy speech.

Some invasion, sure, it was ;  
For we heard the captains scold ;  
Waspish cavalry a-buzz,—  
Troopers uniformed in gold,  
Sable-sashed,— to charge on us.

Could I find the sedgy angle,  
Where the dragon-flies would turn  
Slender flittings into spangle  
On the sunlight? or would burn —  
Where the berries made a tangle —

Sparkling green and brassy blue ;  
Rendezvousing, by the stream,  
Bands of elf-banditti, who,  
Brigands of the bloom and beam,  
Drunken were with honey-dew.

Could I find the pond that lay  
Where vermillion blossoms showered  
Fragrance down the daisied way ?

## AT THE LANE'S END

That the sassafras embowered  
With the spice of early May?

Could I find it — should I seek —  
The old mill? Its weather-beaten  
Wheel and gable by the creek?  
With its warping roof; worm-eaten,  
Dusty rafters worn and weak.

Where old shadows haunt old places,  
Loft and hopper, stair and bin;  
Ghostly with the dust that laces  
Webs that usher phantoms in,  
Wistful with remembered faces.

While the frogs' grave litanies  
Drowse in far-off antiphone,  
Suplicating, till the eyes  
Of dead friendships, long alone  
In the dusky corners,— rise.

Moonbeams? or the twinkling tip  
Of a star? or, in the darkling  
Twilight, fireflies? there that dip —  
As if Night a myriad sparkling  
Jewels from her hands let slip.

### AT THE LANE'S END

Where, I dream, my youth still crosses,  
With a corn-sack for the meal,  
Through the sprinkled ferns and mosses,  
To the gray mill's lichenized wheel,  
Where the water drips and tosses.

## ENCHANTMENT

The deep seclusion of this forest path,—  
O'er which the green boughs weave a canopy;  
Along which bluet and anemone  
Spread a dim carpet; where the Twilight hath  
Her dark abode; and, sweet as aftermath,  
Wood-fragrance roams,— has so enchanted me,  
That yonder blossoming bramble seems to be  
Some Sylvan resting, rosy from her bath:  
Has so enspelled me with tradition's dreams,  
That every foam-white stream that, twinkling,  
flows,  
And every bird that flutters wings of tan,  
Or warbles hidden, to my fancy seems  
A Naiad dancing to a Faun who blows  
Wild woodland music on the pipes of Pan.

## IN THE FOREST

One well might deem, among these miles of  
woods,

Such were the Forests of the Holy Grail,—  
Brocéliand and Dean: where, clothed in mail,  
The Knights of Arthur rode, and all the broods  
Of legend laired.— And, where no sound in-  
trudes

Upon the ear, except the glimmering wail  
Of some far bird; or, in some flowery swale,  
A brook that murmurs to the solitudes,  
Might think he hears the laugh of Vivien  
Blent with the moan of Merlin, muttering  
bound

By his own magic to one stony spot:  
And, in the cloud that looms above the glen,—  
In which the sun burns like the Table Round,—  
Might dream he sees the towers of Camelot.

## CAN SUCH THINGS BE

Meseemed that while she played, while lightly yet  
    Her fingers fell, as roses bloom by bloom,  
I listened — dead within a mighty room  
Of some old palace where great casements let  
Gaunt moonlight in, that glimpsed a parapet  
    Of statued marble: in the arrased gloom  
    Majestic pictures towered, dim as doom,  
The dreams of Titian and of Tintoret.  
And then, it seemed, along a corridor,  
    A mile of oak, a stricken footstep came,  
    Hurrying, yet slow. . . . I thought long  
        centuries  
Passed ere she entered — she, I loved of yore,  
    For whom I died, who wildly wailed my name  
    And bent and kissed me on the mouth and eyes.

## KNIGHT-ERRANT

Onward he gallops through enchanted gloom.—  
The phantoms of the forest, dark and dim,  
And shadows of vast death environ him —  
Onward he spurs victorious over doom.  
Before his eyes that love's far fires illume —  
Where courage sits, impregnable and grim —  
The form and features of *her* beauty swim,  
Beckoning him on with looks that fears consume.  
The thought of her distress, her lips to kiss,  
Mails him in triple might ; and so at last  
To Lust's huge keep he comes ; its giant wall,  
Wild-towering, frowning from the precipice :  
And through its gate, borne like a bugle-blast,  
O'er night and hell he thunders to his all.

## THE ARTIST

In story books, when I was very young,  
I knew her first, one of the Fairy Race;  
And then it was her picture took its place,  
Framed round with love's deep gold, and draped  
and hung  
High in my heart's red room: no song was sung,  
No tale of passion told, I did not grace  
With her associated form and face,  
And intimated charm of touch and tongue.  
As years went on she grew to more and more,  
Until each thing, symbolic to my heart  
Of beauty,— such as honor, truth, and fame,—  
Within the studio of my soul's thought wore  
Her lineaments, whom I, with all my art,  
Strove to embody and to give a name.

## POETRY AND PHILOSOPHY

Out of the past the dim leaves spake to me  
The thoughts of Pindar with a voice so sweet  
Hyblæan bees seemed swarming my retreat  
Around the reedy well of Poesy.  
I closed the book. Then, knee to neighbor knee,  
Sat with the soul of Plato, to repeat  
Doctrines, till mine seemed some Socratic seat  
High on the summit of Philosophy.  
Around the wave of one Religion taught  
Her first rude children. From the stars that  
burned  
Above the mountained ether, Science learned  
The first vague lessons of the work she wrought.  
Daughters of God, in whom we still behold  
The Age of Iron and the Age of Gold.

## “QUO VADIS”

It is as if imperial trumpets broke  
Again the silence on War's iron height;  
And Cæsar's armored legions marched to fight,  
While Rome, blood-red upon her mountain-yoke,  
Blazed like an awful sunset. At a stroke,  
Again I see the living torches light  
The horrible revels, and the bloated, white,  
Bayed brow of Nero smiling through the smoke:  
And here and there a little band of slaves  
Among dark ruins; and the form of Paul,  
Bearded and gaunt, expounding still the Word:  
And towards the North the tottering architraves  
Of empire; and, wild-waving over all,  
The flaming figure of a Gothic sword.

## TO A CRITIC

R. H. S.

Song hath a catalogue of lovely things  
Thy kind hath oft defiled,— whose spite mis-  
leads  
The world too often! — where the poet reads,  
As in a fable, of old envyings,  
Crows, such as thou, which hush the bird that  
sings,  
Or kill it with their cawings: thorns and weeds,  
Such as thyself, 'midst which the wind sows  
seeds  
Of flow'rs, these crush before one blossom  
swings.  
But here and there the wisdom of a School  
Unknown to these hath often written down  
“Fame” in white ink the future hath turned  
brown;  
When every beauty, heaped with ridicule,  
In their ignoble prose, proved their renown,  
Making each famous — as an ass or fool.

## QUATRAINS

### I

#### *Poetry*

Who hath beheld the goddess face to face,  
Blind with her beauty, all his days shall go  
Climbing lone mountains towards her temple's  
place,  
Weighed with Song's sweet, inexorable woe.

### II

#### *The Unimaginative*

Each form of beauty 's but the new disguise  
Of thoughts more beautiful than forms can be;  
Sceptics, who search with unanointed eyes,  
Never the Earth's wild Fairy-dance shall see.

### III

#### *Music*

God-born before the Sons of God, she hurled,  
With awful symphonies of flood and fire,

## QUATRAINS

God's name on rocking chaos — world by world  
Flamed as the universe rolled from her lyre.

### IV

#### *The Three Elements*

They come as couriers of Heaven: their feet  
Sonorous-sandaled with majestic awe;  
In raiment of swift foam and wind and heat,  
Blowing the trumpets of God's wrath and law.

### V

#### *Rome*

Above the Circus of the World she sat,  
Beautiful and base, a harlot crowned with pride:  
Fierce Nations, upon whom she sneered and spat,  
Shrieked at her feet and for her pastime died.

### VI

#### *On Reading the Life of Haroun er Reshid*

Down all the lantered Bagdad of our youth  
He steals, with golden justice for the poor:  
Within his palace — you shall know the truth! —  
A blood-smeared headsman hides behind each  
door.

## QUATRAINS

### VII

#### *Mnemosyne*

In classic beauty, cold, immaculate,  
A voiceful sculpture, stern and still she stands,  
Upon her brow deep-chiselled love and hate,  
That sorrow o'er dead roses in her hands.

### VIII

#### *Beauty*

High as a star, yet lowly as a flower,  
Unknown she takes her unassuming place  
At Earth's proud masquerade — the appointed  
hour  
Strikes, and, behold! the marvel of her face.

### IX

#### *The Stars*

These — the bright symbols of man's hope and  
fame,  
In which he reads his blessing or his curse —  
Are syllables with which God speaks His name  
In the vast utterance of the universe.

QUATRAINS

X

*'Echo*

Dweller in hollow places, hills and rocks,  
Daughter of Silence and old Solitude,  
Tip-toe she stands within her cave or wood,  
Her only life the noises that she mocks.

## THE DREAMER

Even as a child he loved to thrid the bowers,  
And mark the loafing sunlight's lazy laugh;  
Or, on each season, spell the epitaph  
Of its dead months repeated in their flowers;  
Or list the music of the strolling showers,  
Whose vagabond notes strummed through a  
twinkling staff,  
Or read the day's delivered monograph  
Through all the chapters of its dædal hours.  
Still with the same child-faith and child regard  
He looks on Nature, hearing, at her heart,  
The Beautiful beat out the time and place,  
Through which no lesson of this life is hard,  
No struggle vain of science or of art,  
That dies with failure written on its face.

## WINTER

The flute, whence Summer's dreamy finger-tips  
Drew music,— ripening the cramped kernels in  
The burly chestnut and the chinquapin,  
Red-rounding-out the oval haws and hips,—  
Now Winter crushes to his stormy lips,  
And surly songs whistle around his chin;  
Now the wild days and wilder nights begin  
When, at the eaves, the lengthening icicle drips.  
Thy songs, O Summer, are not lost so soon!  
Still dwells a memory in thy hollow flute,  
Which unto Winter's masculine airs doth give  
Thy own creative qualities of tune,  
Through which we see each bough bend white  
with fruit,  
Each branch with bloom, in snow commemo-  
rative.

## MID-WINTER

All day the clouds hung ashen with the cold;  
And through the snow the muffled waters fell;  
The day seemed drowned in grief too deep to  
tell,  
Like some old hermit whose last bead is told.  
At eve the wind woke, and the snow clouds rolled  
    Aside to leave the fierce sky visible;  
    Harsh as an iron landscape of wan Hell  
The dark hills hung framed in with gloomy gold.  
And then, towards night, the wind seemed some  
    one at  
    My window, wailing: now a little child  
    Crying outside my door; and now the long  
Howl of some starved beast down the flue.— I sat  
    And knew 't was Winter with his madman song  
    Of miseries on which he stared and smiled.

## SPRING

First came the rain, loud, with sonorous lips ;  
A pursuivant who heralded a prince :  
And dawn put on her livery of tints,  
And dusk bound gold about her hair and hips :  
And, all in silver mail, the sunlight came,  
A knight, who bade the winter let him pass ;  
And freed imprisoned beauty, naked as  
The Court of Love, in all her wildflower shame.  
And so she came, in breeze-borne loveliness,  
Across the hills ; and heav'n bent down to bless :  
Above her head the birds were as a choir ;  
And at her feet, like some strong worshiper,  
The shouting water pæan'd praise of her,  
Who, with blue eyes, set the wild world on fire.

## TRANSFORMATION

It is the time when, by the forest falls,  
The touch-me-nots hang faery folly-caps;  
When ferns and flowers fill the lichenèd laps  
Of rocks with color, rich as orient shawls:  
And in my heart I hear a voice that calls  
    Me woodward, where the hamadryad wraps  
    Her limbs in bark, and, bubbling in the saps,  
Sings the sweet Greek of Pan's old madrigals:  
There is a gleam that lures me up the stream—  
    A Naiad swimming with wet limbs of light?  
    Perfume that leads me on from dream to  
        dream—  
An oread's footprints flowering into flight?  
    And, lo! meseems I am a Faun again,  
    One with the myths that I pursue in vain.

## RESPONSE

There is a music of immaculate love,  
That beats within the virginal veins of  
Spring,—  
And trillium blossoms, (like the stars that cling  
To fairies' wands;) and, strung on sprays above,  
White-hearts and mandrake blooms, (that look  
enough  
Like the elves' washing — white with launder-  
ing  
Of May-moon dews;) and all pale-opening  
Wildflowers of the woods are born thereof.  
There is no sod Spring's white foot brushes but  
Must feel the music that vibrates within,  
And thrill to the communicated touch  
Responsive harmonies, that must unshut  
The heart of Beauty for Song's concrete kin,  
Emotions — that are flowers — born of such.

## THE SWASHBUCKLER

Squat-nosed and broad, of big and pompous port;  
A tavern visage, apoplexy haunts,  
All pimple-puffed: the Falstaff-like resort  
Of fat debauchery, whose veined cheek flaunts  
A flabby purple: rusty-spurred he stands  
In rakehell boots and belt, and hanger that  
Claps when, with greasy gauntlets on his hands,  
He swaggers past in cloak and slouch-plumed  
hat.  
'Aggression marches armies in his words;  
And in his oaths great deeds ride cap-à-pie;  
His looks, his gestures breathe the breath of  
swords;  
And in his carriage camp all wars to be:—  
With him, of battles there shall be no lack  
While buxom wenches are and stoops of sack.

## SIMULACRA

Dark in the west the sunset's sombre wrack  
Unrolled vast walls the rams of war had split,  
Along whose battlements the battle lit  
Tempestuous beacons; and, with gates hurled  
back,  
A mighty city, red with ruin and sack,  
Through burning breaches, crumbling bit by  
bit,  
Showed where the God of Slaughter seemed  
to sit  
With Conflagration glaring at each crack.—  
Who knows? perhaps as sleep unto us makes  
Our dreams as real as our waking seems  
With recollections time can not destroy,  
So in the mind of Nature now awakes,  
Haply, some wilder memory, and she dreams  
The stormy story of the fall of Troy.

## THE BLUEBIRD

From morn till noon upon the window-pane  
The tempest tapped with rainy finger-nails,  
And all the afternoon the blustering gales  
Beat at the door with furious feet of rain.  
The rose, near which the lily's bloom lay slain,  
Like some red wound dripped by the garden  
rails,  
On which the sullen slug left silvery trails—  
It seemed the sun would never shine again.  
Then in the drench, long, loud, and clarion-clear,—  
A skyey herald tabarded in blue,—  
A bluebird warbled . . . and at once a  
bow  
Was bent in heaven, and I seemed to hear  
God's sapphire spaces crystallizing through  
The strata'd clouds in azure tremolo.

## CAVERNS

*Written of Colossal Cave, Kentucky.*

Aisles and abysses ; leagues, no man explores,  
    Of rock that labyrinths and night that drips ;  
    Where everlasting silence broods, with lips  
Of adamant, o'er earthquake-builded floors.  
Where forms, such as the Dæmon-World adores,  
    Laborious water carves ; whence echo slips  
    Wild-tongued o'er pools where petrifaction  
        strips  
Her breasts of crystal from which crystal  
        pours.—  
Here where primordial fear, the Gorgon, sits,  
    Staring all life to stone in ghastly mirth,  
    I seem to tread, with awe no tongue can tell,—  
Beneath vast domes, by torrent-tortured pits,  
    'Mid wrecks terrific of the ruined Earth,—  
        An ancient causeway of forgotten Hell.

## A VOICE ON THE WIND



## PROEM

*Oh, for a soul that fulfills  
Music like that of a bird!  
Thrilling with rapture the hills,  
Heedless if any one heard.*

*Or, like the flower that blooms  
Lone in the midst of the trees,  
Filling the woods with perfumes,  
Careless if any one sees.*

*Or, like the wandering wind,  
Over the meadows that swings,  
Bringing wild sweets to mankind,  
Knowing not that which it brings.*

*Oh, for a way to impart  
Beauty, no matter how hard!  
Like unto Nature, whose art  
Never once dreams of reward.*



## A VOICE ON THE WIND

### I

She walks with the wind on the windy height  
When the rocks are loud and the waves are  
white,

And all night long she calls through the night,  
“O my children, come home!”

Her bleak gown, torn as a tattered cloud,  
Tosses around her like a shroud,  
While over the deep her voice rings loud,—  
“O my children, come home, come home!  
O my children, come home!”

### II

Who is she who wanders alone,  
When the wind drives sheer and the rain is  
blown?

Who walks all night and makes her moan,  
“O my children, come home!”

Whose face is raised to the blinding gale;

## A VOICE ON THE WIND

Whose hair blows black and whose eyes are pale,  
While over the world goes by her wail,—

“O my children, come home, come home!  
O my children, come home!”

## III

She walks with the wind in the windy wood;  
The dark rain drips from her hair and hood,  
And her cry sobs by, like a ghost pursued,

“O my children, come home!”

Where the trees loom gaunt and the rocks  
stretch drear,

The owl and the fox crouch back in fear,  
As wild through the wood her voice they hear,—

“O my children, come home, come home!  
O my children, come home!”

## IV

Who is she who shudders by  
When the boughs blow bare and the dead leaves  
fly?

Who walks all night with her wailing cry,  
“O my children, come home!”

Who, strange of look, and wild of tongue,  
With wan feet wounded and hands wild-wrung,

## A VOICE ON THE WIND

Sweeps on and on with her cry, far-flung,—  
“O my children, come home, come home!  
O my children, come home!”

## V

’T is the Spirit of Autumn, no man sees,  
The mother of Death and of Mysteries,  
Who cries on the wind all night to these,  
“O my children, come home!”  
The Spirit of Autumn, pierced with pain,  
Calling her children home again,  
Death and Dreams, through ruin and rain,—  
“O my children, come home, come home!  
O my children, come home!”

## THE LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

Do you know the way that goes  
Over fields of rue and rose,—  
Warm of scent and hot of hue,  
Roofed with heaven's bluest blue,—  
To the Vale of Dreams Come True?

Do you know the path that twines,  
Banked with elder bosks and vines,  
Under boughs that shade a stream,  
Hurrying, crystal as a gleam,  
To the Hills of Love a-Dream?

Tell me, tell me, have you gone  
Through the fields and woods of dawn,  
Meadowlands and trees that roll,  
Great of grass and huge of bole,  
To the Land of Hearts Made Whole?

On the way, among the fields,  
Poppies lift vermillion shields,  
In whose hearts the golden Noon,  
Murmuring her drowsy tune,  
Rocks the sleepy bees that croon.

## LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

On the way, amid the woods,  
Mandrakes muster multitudes,  
'Mid whose blossoms, white as tusk,  
Glides the glimmering Forest-Dusk,  
With her moths of fluttering musk.

Here you hear the stealthy stir  
Of shy lives of hoof and fur;  
Harmless things that hide and peer,  
Hearts that sucked the milk of fear —  
Fox and rabbit, squirrel and deer.

Here you see the mossy flight  
Of faint forms that love the night —  
Whippoorwill and owlet-things,  
Whose weird call before you brings  
Wonder-worlds of happenings.

Now in sunlight, now in shade,  
Water, like a brandished blade,  
Foaming forward, wild of flight,  
Startles, then arrests the sight,  
Whirling steely loops of light.

Through the tree-tops, down the vale,  
Breezes roam, and leave a trail  
Of cool music that the birds,—

## LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

Following in happy herds,—  
Gather up in twittering words.

Blossoms, frail and manifold,  
Shower the way with pearl and gold;  
Blurs, that seem the darling print  
Of the Springtime's feet, or glint  
Of her twinkling gown's torn tint.

There the Myths of old endure:  
Dreams that are the world-soul's cure;  
Things that have no place or play  
In the facts of Everyday  
Round your presence smile and sway.

Suddenly your eyes may see,  
Stepping softly from a tree,—  
Slim of form and wet with dew,—  
The brown Dryad; lips the hue  
Of a berry bit into.

You may mark the Naiad rise  
From her pool's reflected skies;  
In her gaze the heaven that dreams,  
Starred, in twilight-haunted streams,  
Mixed with water's grayer gleams.

## LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

You may see the laurel's girth,  
Big with bloom, give fragrant birth  
To the Oread whose hair,—  
Musk and darkness, light and air,—  
Fills the hush with wonder there.

You may mark the rocks divide,  
And the Faun before you glide,  
Piping on a magic reed,  
Sowing many a music-seed,  
From which bloom and mushroom bead.

Of the rain and sunlight born,  
Young of beard and young of horn,  
You may see the Satyr lie,  
With a very knowing eye,  
Teaching fledgeling birds to fly.

These shall cheer and follow you  
Through the Vale of Dreams Come True:  
Wind-like voices, leaf-like feet;  
Forms of mist and hazy heat,  
In whose pulses sunbeams beat.

Lo! you tread enchanted ground!  
From the hollows all around  
Elf and spirit, gnome and fay,

## LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

Guide your feet along the way  
Till the dewy close of day.

Then beside you, jet on jet,  
Emerald-hued and violet,  
Flickering, floats a firefly light,  
Aye to guide your steps aright  
From the valley to the height.

Steep the way is ; when at last,  
Vale and wood and stream are passed,  
From the heights you shall behold  
Panther heavens of spotted gold  
Tiger-tawny deeps unfold.

You shall see on stocks and stones  
Sunset's bell-deep color tones  
Fallen ; and the valleys filled  
With dusk's purple music, spilled  
On the silence, rapture-thrilled.

Then, as answering bell greets bell,  
Night ring in her miracle  
Of the doméd dark, o'er-rolled,  
Note on note, with starlight cold,  
'Twixt the moon's broad peal of gold.

## LAND OF HEARTS MADE WHOLE

On the hill-top Love-a-Dream  
Shows you then her window-gleam;  
Brings you home and folds your soul  
In the peace of vale and knoll,  
In the Land of Hearts Made Whole.

## THE WIND OF SUMMER

From the hills and far away  
All the long, warm summer day  
Comes the Wind and seems to say:

“ Come, oh, come! and let us go  
Where the meadows bend and blow,  
Waving with the white-tops’ snow.

“ 'Neath the hyssop-colored sky  
'Mid the meadows we will lie  
Watching the white clouds roll by;

“ While your hair my hands shall press  
With a cooling tenderness  
Till your grief grows less and less:

“ Come, oh, come! and let us roam  
Where the rock-cut waters comb  
Flowing crystal into foam.

## THE WIND OF SUMMER

“ Under trees whose trunks are brown,  
On the banks that violets crown,  
We will watch the fish flash down;

“ While my voice your ear shall soothe  
With a whisper soft and smooth  
Till your care shall wax uncouth.

“ Come! where forests, line on line,—  
Armies of the oak and pine,—  
Scale the hills and shout and shine.

“ We will wander, hand in hand,  
Ways where tall the toadstools stand,  
Mile-stones white of Fairyland.

“ While your eyes my lips shall kiss,  
Dewy as a wild-rose is,  
Till they gaze on naught but bliss.

“ On the meadows you will hear,  
Leaning low your spirit ear,  
Cautious footsteps drawing near.

“ You will deem it but a bee,  
Murmuring soft and sleepily,  
Till your inner sight shall see

## THE WIND OF SUMMER

“ ‘T is a presence passing slow,  
All its shining hair ablow,  
Through the white-tops’ tossing snow.

“ By the waters, if you will,  
And your inmost soul is still,  
Melody your ears shall fill.

“ You will deem it but the stream  
Rippling onward in a dream,  
Till upon your gaze shall gleam

“ Arm of spray and throat of foam —  
‘T is a spirit there a-roam  
Where the radiant waters comb.

“ In the forest, if you heed,  
You shall hear a magic reed  
Sow sweet notes like silver seed.

“ You will deem your ears have heard  
Stir of tree or song of bird,  
Till your startled eyes are blurred

“ By a vision, instant seen,  
Naked gold and naked green,  
Glimmering the boughs between.

## THE WIND OF SUMMER

“ Follow me ! and you shall see  
Wonder-worlds of mystery  
That are only known to me ! ”

Thus outside my city door  
Speaks the Wind its wildwood lore,  
Speaks, and lo ! I go once more.

## THE WIND OF WINTER

The Winter Wind, the wind of death,  
Who knocked upon my door,  
Now through the key-hole entereth,  
Invisible and hoar:  
He breathes around his icy breath  
And treads the flickering floor.

I heard him, wandering in the night,  
Tap at my window pane,  
With ghostly fingers, snowy white,  
I heard him tug in vain,  
Until the shuddering candle-light  
Did cringe with fear and strain.

The fire, awakened by his voice,  
Leapt up with frantic arms,  
Like some wild babe that greets, with noise,  
Its father home who storms,  
With rosy gestures that rejoice  
And crimson kiss that warms.

## THE WIND OF WINTER

Now in the hearth he sits and, drowned  
Among the ashes, blows ;  
Or through the room goes stealing round  
On cautious-stepping toes,  
Deep-mantled in the drowsy sound  
Of night that sleet and snows.

And oft, like some thin fairy-thing,  
The stormy hush amid,  
I hear his captive trebles ring  
Beneath the kettle's lid ;  
Or now a harp of elfland string  
In some dark cranny hid.

Again I hear him, imp-like, whine,  
Cramped in the gusty flue ;  
Or knotted in the resinous pine  
Raise goblin cry and hue,  
While through the smoke his eyeballs shine,  
A sooty red and blue.

At last I hear him, nearing dawn,  
Take up his roaring broom,  
And sweep wild leaves from wood and lawn,  
And from the heavens the gloom,  
To show the gaunt world lying wan,  
And morn's cold rose a-bloom.

## THE LEAF-CRICKET

### I

Small twilight singer  
Of dew and mist: thou ghost-gray, gossamer  
winger  
    Of dusk's dim glimmer,  
How cool thy note sounds; how thy wings of  
shimmer  
    Vibrate, soft-sighing,  
Meseems, for Summer that is dead or dying.  
    I stand and listen,  
And at thy song the garden-beds, that glisten  
    With rose and lily,  
Seem touched with sadness; and the tuberose  
chilly,  
Breathing around its cold and colorless breath,  
Fills the pale evening with wan hints of death.

### II

I see thee quaintly  
Beneath the leaf; thy shell-shaped winglets  
faintly —

## THE LEAF-CRICKET

As thin as spangle  
Of cobwebbed rain — held up at airy angle;  
I hear thy tinkle,  
Thy fairy notes, the silvery stillness sprinkle;  
Investing wholly  
The moonlight with divinest melancholy:  
Until, in seeming,  
I see the Spirit of the Summer dreaming  
Amid her ripened orchards, apple-strewn,  
Her great, grave eyes fixed on the harvest-moon.

## III

As dewdrops beady,  
As mist minute, thy notes ring low and reedy:  
The vaguest vapor  
Of melody, now near; now, like some taper  
Of sound, far fading —  
Thou will-o'-wisp of music aye evading.  
Among the bowers,  
The fog-washed stalks of Autumn's weeds and  
flowers,  
By hill and hollow,  
I hear thy murmur and in vain I follow —  
Thou jack-o'-lantern voice, thou elfin cry,  
Thou dirge, that tellest Beauty she must die.

THE LEAF-CRICKET

IV

And when the frantic  
Wild winds of Autumn with the dead leaves  
antic;  
And walnuts scatter  
The mire of lanes; and dropping acorns patter  
In grove and forest,  
Like some frail grief, with the rude blast thou  
warrest,  
Sending thy slender  
Far cry against the gale, that, rough, untender,  
Untouched of sorrow,  
Sweeps thee aside, where, haply, I to-morrow  
Shall find thee lying, tiny, cold and crushed,  
Thy weak wings folded and thy music hushed.

## THE OWLET

### I

When dusk is drowned in drowsy dreams,  
And slow the hues of sunset die;  
When firefly and moth go by,  
And in still streams the new-moon gleams,  
A sickle in the sky:  
Then from the hills there comes a cry,  
The owlet's cry:  
A shivering voice that sobs and screams,  
That, frightened, screams:—

“ Who is it, who is it, who?  
Who rides through the dusk and dew,  
With a pair of horns,  
As thin as thorns,  
And face a bubble-blue?  
Who, who, who!  
Who is it, who is it, who? ”

## THE OWLET

### II

When night has dulled the lily's white,  
And opened wide the moonflower's eyes,  
When pale mists rise and veil the skies,  
And round the height in whispering flight  
The night wind sounds and sighs:  
Then in the woods again it cries,  
The owlet cries:  
A shivering voice that calls in fright,  
In maundering fright:—

“ Who is it, who is it, who?  
Who walks with a shuffling shoe,  
'Mid the gusty trees,  
With a face none sees,  
And a form as ghostly too?  
Who, who, who!  
Who is it, who is it, who? ”

### III

When midnight leans a listening ear  
And tinkles on her insect lutes;  
When 'mid the roots the cricket flutes,  
And marsh and mere, now far, now near,  
A jack-o'-lantern foots:

### THE OWLET

Then o'er the pool again it hoots,  
The owlet hoots:  
A voice that shivers as with fear,  
That cries in fear:—

“ Who is it, who is it, who?  
Who creeps with his glow-worm crew  
Above the mire  
With a corpse-light fire,  
As only dead men do?  
Who, who, who!  
Who is it, who is it, who? ”

## THE POET

He stands above all worldly schism,  
And, gazing over life's abysm,  
Beholds, within the starry range  
Of heaven, laws of death and change,  
That, through his soul's prophetic prism,  
Are turned to rainbows wild and strange.

Through nature is his hope made surer  
Of that ideal, his allurer,  
By whom his life is upward drawn  
To mount pale pinnacles of dawn,  
'Mid which all that is fairer, purer  
Of love and lore it comes upon.

An alkahest, that makes gold metal  
Of dross, his mind is — where one petal  
Of one wild-rose will well outweigh  
The piled-up facts of every-day —  
Where commonplaces, there that settle,  
Are changed to things of heavenly ray.

## THE POET

He climbs by steps of stars and flowers,  
Companioned of the spirit Hours,  
And sets his feet in pastures where  
No merely mortal feet may fare;  
And higher than the stars he towers  
Though lowly as the flowers there.

His comrades are his own high fancies  
And thoughts in which his soul romances;  
And every part of heaven or earth  
He visits, lo, assumes new worth;  
And touched with loftier traits and trances  
Reshines as with a lovelier birth.

He is the play, also the player;  
The word that 's said, likewise the sayer;  
And in the books of heart and head  
There is no thing he has not read;  
Of time and tears he is the weigher,  
And mouthpiece 'twixt the quick and dead.

He dies: but, mounting ever higher,  
Wings Phœnix-like from out his pyre  
Above our mortal day and night,  
Clothed on with sempiternal light;  
And raimented in thought's fine fire  
Flames on in everlasting flight.

### THE POET

Unseen, yet seen, on heights of visions,  
Aboye all praise and world derisions,  
His spirit and his deathless brood  
Of dreams fare on, a multitude,  
While on the pillar of great missions  
His name and place are granite-hewed.

## SUMMER NOONTIDE

The slender snail clings to the leaf  
Gray on its silvered underside;  
And slowly, slowlier than the snail, with brief  
Bright steps, whose ripening touch foretells the  
sheaf,

Her warm hands berry-dyed,  
Comes down the tanned Noontide.

The pungent fragrance of the mint  
And pennyroyal drench her gown,  
That leaves long shreds of trumpet-blossom tint  
Among the thorns, and everywhere the glint  
Of gold and white and brown  
Her flowery steps waft down.

The leaves, like hands with emerald veined,  
Along her way try their wild best  
To reach the jewel — whose hot hue was drained  
From some rich rose that all the June con-  
tained —  
The butterfly, soft pressed  
Upon her sunny breast.

## SUMMER NOONTIDE

Her shawl, the lace-like elder bloom,  
She hangs upon the hillside brake,  
Smelling of warmth and of her breast's perfume,  
And, lying in the citron-colored gloom  
Beside the lilyed lake,  
She stares the buds awake.

Or, with a smile, through watery deeps  
She leads the oaring turtle's legs ;  
Or guides the crimson fin, that swims and sleeps,  
From pad to pad, from which the young frog  
leaps ;  
And to its nest's green eggs  
The reed-bird there that begs.

Then 'mid the fields of unmown hay  
She shows the bees where sweets are found ;  
And points the butterflies, at airy play,  
And dragon-flies, along the water-way,  
Where honeyed flowers abound  
For them to flicker round.

Or where ripe apples pelt with gold  
Some barn — around which, coned with snow,  
The wild-potato blooms — she mounts its old  
Mossed roof, and through warped sides, the  
knots have holed,

## SUMMER NOONTIDE

Lets her long glances glow  
Into the loft below.

To show the mud-wasp at its cell  
Slenderly busy: swallows, too,  
Packing against a beam their nest's clay shell;  
And crouching in the dark the owl as well  
With all her downy crew  
Of owlets gray of hue.

These are her joys; and until dusk  
Lounging she walks where reapers reap,  
From sultry raiment shaking scents of musk,  
Rustling the corn within its silken husk,  
And driving down heav'n's deep  
White herds of clouds like sheep.

## TO THE LOCUST

Thou pulse of hotness, who, with reed-like  
breast,

Makest meridian music, long and loud,  
Accentuating summer! — dost thy best  
To make the sunbeams fiercer, and to crowd  
With lonesomeness the long, close afternoon —  
When Labor leans, swart-faced and beady-  
browed,

Upon his sultry scythe — thou tangible tune  
Of heat, whose waves incessantly arise  
Quivering and clear beneath the cloudless  
skies.

Thou singest, and upon his haggard hills  
Drouth yawns and rubs his heavy eyes and  
wakes;

Brushes the hot hair from his face; and fills  
The land with death as sullenly he takes  
Downward his dusty way: 'midst woods and  
fields

At every pool his burning thirst he slakes;

## TO THE LOCUST

No grove so deep, no bank so high it shields  
A spring from him; no creek evades his eye;  
He needs but look and they are withered dry.

Thou singest, and thy song is as a spell  
Of somnolence to charm the land with sleep;  
A thorn of sound that pierces dale and dell,  
Diffusing slumber over vale and steep.  
Sleepy the forest, nodding sleepy boughs;  
Sleepy the pastures with their sleepy sheep;  
Sleepy the creek where sleepily the cows  
Stand knee-deep, and the very heaven seems  
Sleepy and lost in undetermined dreams.

Art thou a rattle that Monotony,  
Summer's dull nurse, old sister of slow Time,  
Shakes for Day's peevish pleasure, who in glee  
Takes its discordant music for sweet rhyme?  
Or oboe that the Summer Noontide plays,  
Sitting with Ripeness 'neath the orchard-tree,  
Trying repeatedly the same shrill phrase,  
Until the musky peach with weariness  
Drops, and the hum of murmuring bees grows  
less?

## JULY

Now 'tis the time when, tall,  
The long blue torches of the bellflower gleam  
Among the trees; and, by the wooded stream,  
In many a fragrant ball,  
Blooms of the button-bush fall.

Let us go forth and seek  
Woods where the wild plums reddens and the  
beech  
Plumps its stout burrs; and, swelling, just in  
reach,  
The pawpaw, emerald-sleek,  
Ripens along the creek.

Now 't is the time when ways  
Of glimmering green flaunt white the giant  
plumes  
Of the black-cohosh; and through bramble  
glooms,—  
A blur of orange rays,—  
The butterfly-blossoms blaze.

## JULY

Let us go forth and hear  
The spiral music that the locusts beat,  
And that small spray of sound, so grassy sweet,  
    Dear to a country ear,  
    The cricket's summer cheer.

Now golden celandine  
Is hairy hung with silvery sacs of seeds,  
And bugled o'er with freckled gold, like beads,  
    Beneath the fox-grape vine,  
    The jewel-weed's blossoms shine.

Let us go forth and see  
The dragon- and the butterfly, like gems,  
Spangling the sunbeams ; and the clover stems,  
    Weighed down with many a bee,  
    Nodding mellifluously.

Now morns are full of song ;  
The cat-bird and the red-bird and the jay  
Upon the hilltops rouse the ruddy day,  
    Who, dewy, blithe, and strong,  
    Lures their wild wings along.

Now noons are full of dreams ;  
The clouds of heaven and the wandering breeze  
Follow a vision ; and the flowers and trees,

## JULY

The hills and fields and streams,  
Are lapped in mystic gleams.

The nights are full of love;  
The stars and moon take up the golden tale  
Of the sunk sun, and passionate and pale,  
Mixing their fires above,  
Grow eloquent thereof.

Such days are like a sigh  
That beauty heaves from a full heart of bliss:  
Such nights are like the sweetness of a kiss  
On lips that half deny —  
The warm lips of July.

## EVENING ON THE FARM

From out the hills where twilight stands,  
Above the shadowy pasture-lands,  
With strained and strident cry,  
Beneath pale skies that sunset bands,  
The bull-bats fly.

A cloud hangs over, strange of shape,  
And, colored like the half-ripe grape,  
Seems some uneven stain  
On heaven's azure, thin as crape,  
And blue as rain.

By ways, that sunset's sardonyx  
O'erflares, and gates the farm-boy clicks,  
Through which the cattle came,  
The mullein stalks seem giant wicks  
Of downy flame.

From woods no glimmer enters in,  
Above the streams that, wandering, win  
From out the violet hills,  
Those haunters of the dusk begin,  
The whippoorwills.

## EVENING ON THE FARM

Adown the dark the firefly marks  
Its flight in golden-emerald sparks;  
And, loosened from his chain,  
The shaggy watch-dog bounds and barks,  
    And barks again.

Each breeze brings scents of hill-heaped hay;  
And now an owlet, far away,  
Cries twice or thrice, “T-o-o-w-h-o-o”;  
And cool dim moths of mottled gray  
    Flit through the dew.

The silence sounds its frog-bassoon,  
Where, on the woodland creek’s lagoon,  
Pale as a ghostly girl  
Lost ’mid the trees, looks down the moon  
    With face of pearl.

Within the shed where logs, late hewed,  
Smell forest-sweet, and chips of wood  
Make blurs of white and brown,  
The brood-hen cuddles her warm brood  
    Of teetering down.

The clattering guineas in the tree  
Din for a time; and quietly  
The hen-house, near the fence,  
Sleeps, save for some brief rivalry  
    Of cocks and hens.

## EVENING ON THE FARM

A cow-bell tinkles by the rails,  
Where, streaming white in foaming pails,  
Milk makes an uddery sound;  
While overhead the black bat trails  
    Around and round.

The night is still. The slow cows chew  
A drowsy cud. The bird that flew  
And sang is in its nest.  
It is the time of falling dew,  
    Of dreams and rest.

The brown bees sleep; and round the walk,  
The garden path, from stalk to stalk  
The bungling beetle booms,  
Where two soft shadows stand and talk  
    Among the blooms.

The stars are thick: the light is dead  
That dyed the west: and Drowsyhead,  
Tuning his cricket-pipe,  
Nods, and some apple, round and red,  
    Drops over-ripe.

Now down the road, that shambles by,  
A window, shining like an eye  
Through climbing rose and gourd,  
Shows where Toil sups and these things lie —  
    His heart and hoard.

## UNDER THE HUNTER'S MOON

White from her chrysalis of cloud,  
The moth-like moon swings upward through  
the night;  
And all the bee-like stars that crowd  
Heav'n's hollow hive wane in her silvery light.

Along the distance folds of mist  
Hang frost-pale, ridging all the dark with  
gray;  
Tinting the trees with amethyst,  
Touching with pearl and purple every spray.

All night the stealthy frost and fog  
Conspire to slay the rich-robed weeds and  
flowers;  
To strip the woods of wealth, and clog  
With piled-up gold of leaves the creek that  
cowers.

I seem to see their Spirits stand,  
Molded of moonlight, faint of form and face,

## UNDER THE HUNTER'S MOON

Now reaching high a chilly hand  
To pluck some walnut from its spicy place:

Now with fine fingers, phantom-cold,  
Splitting the wahoo's pods of rose, and thin  
The bittersweet's globes of gold,  
To show the coal-red berries packed within:

Now on frail threads of gossamer  
Stringing slim pearls of moisture; necklacing  
The flow'rs; and spreading cobweb fur,  
Crystalled with stardew, over everything;

While 'neath the moon, with moon-white feet,  
They wander and a moon-chill music draw  
From thin leaf-cricket flutes — the sweet,  
Dim dirge of Autumn dying in the shaw.

## IN THE LANE

When the hornet hangs in the hollyhock,  
And the brown bee drones i' the rose,  
And the west is a red-streaked four-o'-clock,  
And summer is near its close —  
It 's — Oh, for the gate and the locust lane  
And dusk and dew and home again !

When the katydid sings and the cricket cries,  
And ghosts of the mists ascend,  
And the evening-star is a lamp i' the skies,  
And summer is near its end —  
It 's — Oh, for the fence and the leafy lane,  
And the twilight peace and the tryst again !

When the owlet hoots in the dogwood-tree,  
That leans to the rippling Run,  
And the wind is a wildwood melody,  
And summer is almost done —  
It 's — Oh, for the bridge and the bramble lane,  
And the fragrant hush and her hands again !

## IN THE LANE

When fields smell moist with the dewy hay,  
And woods are cool and wan,  
And a path for dreams is the Milky-way,  
And summer is nearly gone—  
It's—Oh, for the rock and the woodland lane,  
And the silence and stars and her lips again!

When the weight of the apples breaks down the  
limbs,  
And musk-melons split with sweet,  
And the moon's broad boat in the heaven swims,  
And summer has spent its heat—  
It 's—Oh, for the lane, the trysting lane,  
And the deep-mooned night and her love again!

## EPIPHANY

There is nothing that eases my heart so much  
As the wind that blows from the great green  
hills;  
'T is a hand of balsam whose healing touch  
Unburdens my bosom of ills.

There is nothing that maketh my soul to rejoice  
Like the sunset flaming without a flaw:  
'T is a burning bush whence God's own voice  
Addresses my spirit with awe.

There is nothing that hallows my mind, methinks,  
Like the night with its moon and its starry  
slope:  
'T is a mystical lily whose golden gleams  
Fulfill my being with hope.

There is nothing, no, nothing, we see and feel,  
That speaks to our souls some beautiful  
thought,  
That was not created to help us and heal  
Our lives that are overwrought.

## LIFE

### I

#### *Pessimist*

There is never a thing we dream or do  
But was dreamed and done in the ages gone;  
Everything 's old ; there is nothing that 's new,  
And so it will be while the world goes on.

The thoughts we think have been thought be-  
fore ;  
The deeds we do have long been done ;  
We pride ourselves on our love and lore  
And both are as old as the moon and sun.

We strive and struggle and swink and sweat,  
And the end for each is one and the same ;  
Time and the sun and the frost and wet  
Will wear from its pillar the greatest name.

No answer comes for our prayer or curse,  
No word replies though we shriek in air ;

## LIFE

Ever the taciturn universe  
Stretches unchanged for our curse or prayer.

With our mind's small light in the dark we  
crawl,—

Glow-worm glimmers that creep about,—  
Till the Power that made us, over us all  
Poises His foot and treads us out.

Unasked He fashions us out of clay,  
A little water, a little dust,  
And then in our holes He thrusts us away,  
With never a word, to rot and rust.

'T is a sorry play with a sorry plot,  
This life of hate and of lust and pain,  
Where we play our parts and are soon forgot,  
And all that we do is done in vain.

## II

### *Optimist*

There is never a dream but it shall come true,  
And never a deed but was wrought by plan;  
And life is filled with the strange and new,  
And ever has been since the world began.

## LIFE

As mind develops and soul matures  
These two shall parent Earth's mightier acts ;  
Love is a fact, and 't is love endures  
'Though the world make wreck of all other  
facts.

Through thought alone shall our age obtain  
Above all ages gone before ;  
The tribes of sloth, of brawn, not brain,  
Are the tribes that perish, are known no more.

Within ourselves is a voice of Awe,  
And a hand that points to balanced Scales ;  
The one is Love, and the other, Law,  
And their presence alone it is avails.

For every shadow about our way  
There is a glory of moon and sun ;  
But the hope within us hath more of ray  
Than the light of the sun and the moon made  
one.

Behind all being a purpose lies,  
Undeviating as God hath willed ;  
And he alone it is who dies,  
Who leaves that purpose unfulfilled.

## LIFE

Life is an epic the Master sings,  
Whose theme is Man, and whose music, Soul,  
Where each is a word in the Song of Things,  
That shall roll on while the ages roll.

## MEETING IN THE WOODS

Through ferns and moss the path wound to  
A hollow where the touch-me-nots  
Swung horns of honey filled with dew;  
And where — like footprints — violets blue  
And bluets made sweet sapphire blots,  
'T was there that she had passed I knew.

The grass, the very wilderness  
On either side, breathed rapture of  
Her passage: 't was her hand or dress  
That touched some tree — a slight caress —  
That made the wood-birds sing above;  
Her step that woke the flowers, I guess.

I hurried, till across my way,  
Foam-footed, bounding through the wood,  
A brook, like some wild child at play,  
Went laughing loud its roundelay;  
And there upon its bank she stood,  
A sunbeam clad in forest gray.

## MEETING IN THE WOODS

And when she saw me, all her face  
    Bloomed like a wild-rose by the stream;  
And to my breast a moment's space  
I gathered her; and all the place  
    Seemed conscious of some happy dream  
Come true to add to Earth its grace:

Some union, that was Heav'n's intent —  
    For which God made the world — the bliss,  
The love, that raised her innocent  
Young face to mine that, smiling, bent  
    And sealed her first words with a kiss —  
As Love might close his testament.

## ROSE AND RUE

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
Do you remember where  
The willows used to screen  
The water flowing fair?  
The mill-stream's banks of green  
Where first our love begun,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one?

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
Do you remember how  
From th' old bridge we would lean —  
The bridge that 's broken now —  
To watch the minnows sheen  
Through ripples of the Run,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one?

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
Do you remember, too,  
The old beech-tree, between  
Whose roots the windflowers grew?

## ROSE AND RUE

Where oft we sat at E'en,  
When stars were few or none,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one?

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
The bark is grown around  
The names I cut therein,  
And the true-love knot that bound;  
The love-knot, clear and clean,  
I carved when our love begun,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one.

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
The roof of the farm-house gray  
Is fallen and mossy green;  
Its rafters rot away:  
The old path scarce is seen  
Where oft our feet would run,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one.

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
Through each old tree and bough  
The lone winds cry and keen —  
The place is haunted now

## ROSE AND RUE

With ghosts of what-has-been,  
And dreams of love-long-done,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one.

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
There, in your world of wealth,  
There, where you move a queen,  
Broken in heart and health,  
Does there ever rise a scene  
Of days, your thought would shun,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one?

Mamie Dean, ah, Mamie Dean,  
Here, 'mid the rose and rue,  
Would God that your grave were green,  
And I were lying, too!  
Here on the hill, I mean,  
Where oft we laughed in the sun,  
When you were seventeen,  
And I was twenty-one.

## A MAID WHO DIED OLD

Frail, shrunken face, so pinched and worn,  
That life has carved with care and doubt!  
So weary waiting, night and morn,  
For that which never came about!  
Pale lamp, so utterly forlorn,  
In which God's light at last is out.

Gray hair, that lies so thin and prim  
On either side the sunken brows!  
And soldered eyes, so deep and dim,  
No word of man could now arouse!  
And hollow hands, so virgin slim,  
Forever clasped in silent vows!

Poor breasts! that God designed for love,  
For baby lips to kiss and press!  
That never felt, yet dreamed thereof,  
The human touch, the child caress —  
That lie like shriveled blooms above  
The heart's long-perished happiness.

### A MAID WHO DIED OLD

O withered body, Nature gave  
For purposes of death and birth,  
That never knew, and could but crave  
Those things perhaps that make life worth —  
Rest now, alas! within the grave,  
Sad shell that served no end of Earth.

## COMMUNICANTS

Who knows the things they dream, alas !  
Or feel, who lie beneath the ground ?  
Perhaps the flowers, the leaves and grass  
That close them round.

In spring the violets may spell  
The moods of them we know not of ;  
Or lilies sweetly syllable  
Their thoughts of love.

Haply, in summer, dew and scent  
Of all they feel may be a part ;  
Each red rose be the testament  
Of some rich heart.

The winds of fall be utterance,  
Perhaps, of saddest things they say ;  
Wild leaves may word some dead romance  
In some dim way.

In winter all their sleep profound  
Through frost may speak to grass and  
stream,  
Stilling them with the silent sound  
Of all they dream.

## THE DEAD DAY

The west builds high a sepulchre  
Of cloudy granite and of gold,  
Where twilight's priestly hours inter  
The day like some great king of old.

A censer, rimmed with silver fire,  
The new moon swings above his tomb;  
While, organ-stops of God's own choir,  
Star after star throbs in the gloom.

And night draws near, the sadly sweet —  
A nun whose face is calm and fair —  
And kneeling at the dead day's feet  
Her soul goes up in silent prayer.

In prayer, we feel through dewy gleam  
And flowery fragrance, and — above  
All Earth — the ecstasy and dream  
That haunt the mystic heart of love.

## ALLUREMENT

Across the world she sends me word,  
From gardens fair as Falerina's,  
Now by a blossom, now a bird,  
To come to her, who long has lured  
With magic sweeter than Alcina's.

I know not what her word may mean,  
I know not what may mean the voices  
She sends as messengers unseen,  
That through the hush around me lean,  
And whisper till my heart rejoices.

Soon must I go. I must away.  
Must take the path that is appointed.  
God grant I reach her realm some day,  
Where by her love, as by a ray,  
My soul shall be anointed.

## AUGUST

### I

Clad on with glowing beauty and the peace,  
Benign, of calm maturity, she stands  
Among her meadows and her orchard-lands,  
And on her mellowing gardens and her trees,  
Out of the ripe abundance of her hands  
Bestows increase  
And fruitfulness, as, wrapped in sunny ease,  
Blue-eyed and blonde she goes,  
Upon her bosom Summer's richest rose.

### II

And he who follows where her footsteps lead,  
By hill and rock, by forest-side and stream,  
May glimpse the glory of her visible dream,  
In flower and fruit, in rounded nut and seed:  
She, in whose path the very shadows gleam;  
Whose humblest weed

## AUGUST

Seems lovelier than June's loveliest flower, indeed,  
And sweeter to the smell  
Than April's self within a rainy dell.

## III

Hers is a sumptuous simplicity  
Within the fair Republic of her flowers,  
Where you may see her standing hours on  
hours,  
Breast-deep in gold, soft-holding up a bee  
To her hushed ear; or sitting under bowers  
Of greenery,  
A butterfly a-tilt upon her knee;  
Or lounging on her hip,  
Dancing a cricket on her finger-tip.

## IV

Ay, let me breathe hot scents that tell of you:  
The hoary catnip and the meadow-mint,  
On which the honor of your touch doth print  
Itself as odor. Let me drink the hue  
Of ironweed and mist-flower here that hint  
With purple and blue,  
The rapture that your presence doth imbue  
Their inmost essence with,  
Immortal, though as transient as a myth.

AUGUST

V

Yea, let me feed on sounds that still assure  
Me where you hide: the brooks', whose happy  
din  
Tells where, the deep, retired woods within,  
Disrobed, you bathe; the birds', whose drowsy  
lure  
Tells where you slumber, your warm, nest-  
ling chin  
Soft on the pure,  
Pink cushion of your palm. . . . What bet-  
ter cure  
For care and memory's ache  
Than to behold you thus, and watch you wake.

## THE BUSH-SPARROW

### I

Ere wild-haws, looming in the glooms,  
Build bolted drifts of breezy blooms;  
And in the whistling hollow there  
The red-bud bends, as brown and bare  
As buxom Roxy's up-stripped arm;  
From some gray hickory or larch,  
Sighed o'er the sodden meads of March,  
The sad heart thrills and reddens warm  
To hear you braving the rough storm,  
Frail courier of green-gathering powers;  
Rebelling sap in trees and flowers;  
Love's minister come heralding—  
O sweet saint-voice among bleak bowers!  
O brown-red pursuivant of Spring!

### II

“Moan,” sob the woodland waters still  
Down bloomless ledges of the hill;  
And gray, gaunt clouds like harpies hang

## THE BUSH-SPARROW

In harpy heavens, and swoop and clang  
Sharp beaks and talons of the wind:  
Black scowl the forests, and unkind  
The far fields as the near: while song  
Seems murdered and all beauty wrong.  
One weak frog only in the thaw  
Of spawny pools wakes cold and raw,  
Expires a melancholy bass  
And stops as if bewildered: then  
Along the frowning wood again,  
Flung in the thin wind's vulture face,  
From woolly tassels of the proud,  
Red-bannered maples, long and loud,  
"The Spring is come! is here! her Grace! her  
Grace!"

## III

"Her Grace, the Spring! her Grace! her Grace!  
Climbs, beautiful and sunny browed,  
Up, up the kindling hills and wakes  
Blue berries in the berry brakes:  
With fragrant flakes, that blow and bleach,  
Deep-powders smothered quince and peach:  
Eyes dogwoods with a thousand eyes:  
Teaches each sod how to be wise  
With twenty wildflowers to one weed,  
And kisses germs that they may seed.

### THE BUSH-SPARROW

In purest purple and sweet white  
Treads up the happier hills of light,  
Bloom-, cloudy-borne, song in her hair  
And balm and beam of odorous air.  
Winds, her retainers; and the rains  
Her yeomen strong who sweep the plains:  
Her scarlet knights of dawn, and gold  
Of eve, her panoply unfold:  
Her herald tabarded behold!  
Awake to greet! prepare to sing!  
She comes, the darling Duchess, Spring!"

## QUIET

A log-hut in the solitude,  
A clapboard roof to rest beneath !  
This side, the shadow-haunted wood ;  
That side, the sunlight-haunted heath.

At daybreak Morn will come to me  
In raiment of the white winds spun ;  
Slim in her rosy hand the key  
That opes the gateway of the sun.

Her smile will help my heart enough  
With love to labor all the day,  
And cheer the road, whose rocks are rough,  
With her smooth footprints, each a ray.

At dusk a voice will call afar,  
A lone voice like the whippoorwill's ;  
And, on her shimmering brow one star,  
Night will descend the western hills.

She at my door till dawn will stand,  
With gothic eyes, that, dark and deep,  
Are mirrors of a mystic land,  
Fantastic with the towns of sleep.

## MUSIC

Thou, oh, thou !  
Thou of the chorded shell and golden plec-  
trum, thou  
Of the dark eyes and pale pacific brow !  
Music, who by the plangent waves,  
Or in the echoing night of labyrinthine caves,  
Or on God's mountains, lonely as the stars,  
Touchest reverberant bars  
Of immemorial sorrow and amaze ;—  
Keeping regret and memory awake,  
And all the immortal ache  
Of love that leans upon the past's sweet days  
In retrospection ! — now, oh, now,  
Interpreter and heart-physician, thou  
Who gazest on the heaven and the hell  
Of life, and singest each as well,  
Touch with thy all-mellifluous finger-tips  
Or thy melodious lips,  
This sickness named my soul,  
Making it whole  
As is an echo of a chord,

## MUSIC

Or some symphonic word,  
Or sweet vibrating sigh,  
That deep, resurgent, still doth rise and die  
On thy voluminous roll ;  
Part of the beauty and the mystery  
That axles Earth with music ; as a slave,  
Swinging it round and round on each sonorous  
pole,  
'Mid spheric harmony,  
And choral majesty,  
And diapasoning of wind and wave ;  
Speeding it on its far elliptic way  
'Mid vasty anthemings of night and day.—  
O cosmic cry  
Of two eternities, wherein we see  
The phantasms, Death and Life,  
At endless strife  
Above the silence of a monster grave.

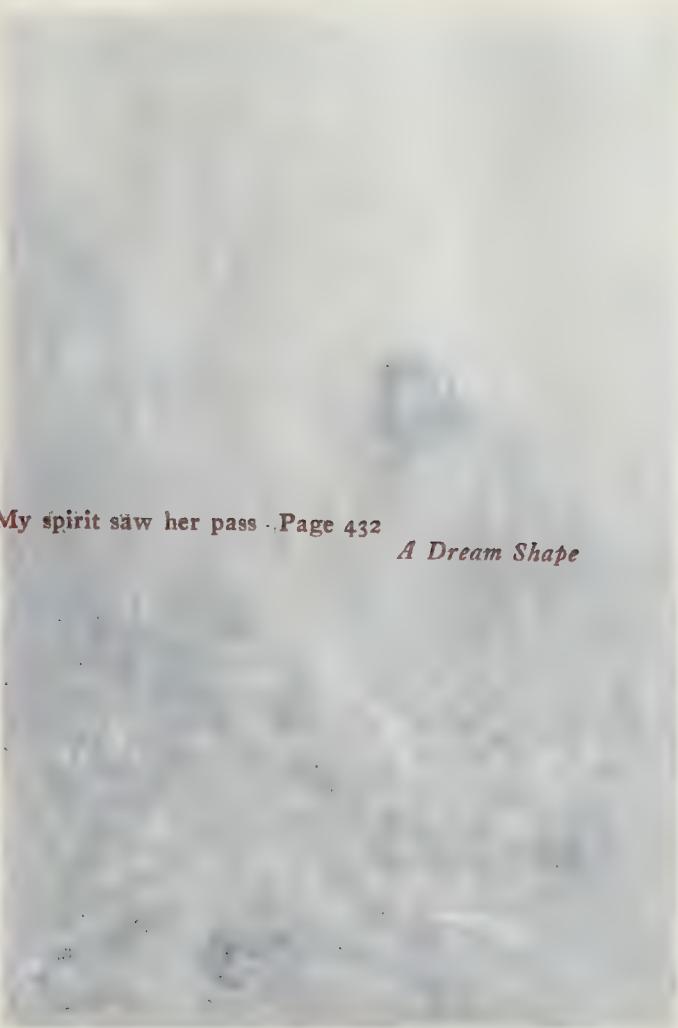
### A DREAM SHAPE

With moon-white hearts that held a gleam  
I gathered wildflowers in a dream,  
And shaped a woman, whose sweet blood  
Was odor of the wildwood bud.

From dew, the starlight arrowed through,  
I wrought a woman's eyes of blue;  
The lids that on her eyeballs lay  
Were rose-pale petals of the May.

Out of a rosebud's veins I drew  
The fragrant crimson beating through  
The languid lips of her, whose kiss  
Was as a poppy's drowsiness.

Out of the moonlight and the air  
I wrought the glory of her hair,  
That o'er her eyes' blue heaven lay  
Like some gold cloud o'er dawn of day.



My spirit saw her pass . Page 432

*A Dream Shape*

## A DREAM-SHAPE

hearts that held a gleam  
I gathered with flowers in a dream,  
And shaped a woman whose sweet blood  
Was odor of the wildness had.

I wrought a woman's eyes of blue;  
The iris that on her eyeballs lay  
Were rose-leaf petals of the May.

Out of a rosebush I plucked the bough

The languid lips of her, whose kiss  
Was as a poppy's drowsiness.

Out of the moonlight and the air  
I wrought the glory of her hair,  
That o'er her eyes' blue heaven lay  
Like some gold cloud o'er dawn of day.





### A DREAM SHAPE

I took the music of the breeze  
And water, whispering in the trees,  
And shaped the soul that breathed below  
A woman's blossom breasts of snow.

A shadow's shadow in the glass  
Of sleep, my spirit saw her pass:  
And thinking of it now, meseems  
We only live within our dreams.

For in that time she was to me  
More real than our reality;  
More real than Earth, more real than I—  
The unreal things that pass and die.

## THE OLD BARN

Low, swallow-swept and gray,  
Between the orchard and the spring,  
All its wide windows overflowing hay,  
And crannied doors a-swing,  
The old barn stands to-day.

Deep in its hay the Leghorn hides  
A round white nest; and, humming soft  
On roof and rafter, or its log-rude sides,  
Black in the sun-shot loft,  
The building hornet glides.

Along its corn-crib, cautiously  
As thieving fingers, skulks the rat;  
Or in warped stalls of fragrant timothy,  
Gnaws at some loosened slat,  
Or passes shadowy.

A dream of drouth made audible  
Before its door, hot, harsh, and shrill

### THE OLD BARN

All day the locust sings. . . . What other  
spell  
Shall hold it, lazier still  
Than the long day's, now tell:—

Dusk and the cricket and the strain  
Of tree-toad and of frog; and stars  
That burn above the rich west's ribbéd stain;  
And dropping pasture bars,  
And cowbells up the lane.

Night and the moon and katydid,  
And leaf-lisp of the wind-touched boughs;  
And mazy shadows that the fireflies thrid;  
And sweet breath of the cows,  
And the lone owl here hid.

## THE WOOD WITCH

There is a woodland witch who lies  
With bloom-bright limbs and beam-bright eyes,  
Among the water-flags that rank  
The slow brook's heron-haunted bank.  
The dragonflies, in brass and blue,  
Are signs she works her sorcery through;  
Weird, wizard characters she weaves  
Her spells with under forest leaves,—  
These wait her word, like imps, upon  
The gray flag-pods; their wings, of lawn  
And gauze; their bodies, gleaming green.  
While o'er the wet sand,— left between  
The running water and the still,—  
In pansy hues and daffodil,  
The fancies that she doth devise  
Assume the forms of butterflies,  
Rich-colored.— And 't is she you hear,  
Whose sleepy rune, hummed in the ear  
Of silence, bees and beetles purr,  
And the dry-droning locusts whirr;  
Till, where the wood is very lone,

## THE WOOD WITCH

Vague monotone meets monotone,  
And Slumber is begot and born,  
A faery child beneath the thorn.  
There is no mortal who may scorn  
The witchery she spreads around  
Her dim demesne, wherein is bound  
The beauty of abandoned time,  
As some sweet thought 'twixt rhyme and  
rhyme.  
And through her spells you shall behold  
The blue turn gray, the gray turn gold  
Of hollow heaven; and the brown  
Of twilight vistas twinkled down  
With fireflies; and in the gloom  
Feel the cool vowels of perfume  
Slow-syllabled of weed and bloom.  
But, in the night, at languid rest,—  
When like a spirit's naked breast  
The moon slips from a silver mist,—  
With star-bound brow, and star-wreathed  
wrist,  
If you should see her rise and wave  
You welcome — ah! what thing could save  
You then? forevermore her slave!

## MAY.

The golden discs of the rattlesnake-weed,  
That spangle the woods and dance—  
No gleam of gold that the twilights hold  
Is strong as their necromance:  
For, under the oaks where the woodpaths lead,  
The golden discs of the rattlesnake-weed  
Are the May's own utterance.

The azure stars of the bluet bloom,  
That sprinkle the woodland's trance—  
No blink of blue that a cloud lets through  
Is sweet as their countenance:  
For, over the knolls that the woods perfume,  
The azure stars of the bluet bloom  
Are the light of the May's own glance.

With her wondering words and her looks she  
comes,  
In a sunbeam of a gown;  
She needs but think and the blossoms wink,  
But look, and they shower down.  
By orchard ways, where the wild bee hums,  
With her wondering words and her looks she  
comes  
Like a little maid to town.

## RAIN

### I

Around, the stillness deepened; then the grain  
Went wild with wind; and every briery lane  
Was swept with dust; and then, tempestuous  
    black,

Hillward the tempest heaved a monster back,  
That on the thunder leaned as on a cane;  
And on huge shoulders bore a cloudy pack,  
That gullied gold from many a lightning crack:  
One great drop splashed and wrinkled down the  
    pane,

And then field, hill, and wood were lost in rain.

### II

At last, through clouds,— as from a cavern hewn  
Into night's heart,— the sun burst, angry roon;  
And every cedar, with its weight of wet,  
Against the sunset's fiery splendor set,  
Startled to beauty, seemed with rubies strewn:  
Then in drenched gardens, like sweet phantoms  
    met,  
Dim odors rose of pink and mignonette;  
And in the east a confidence, that soon  
Grew to the calm assurance of the moon.

## FALL

Sad-hearted Spirit of the solitudes,  
Who comest through the ruin-wedded woods !  
Gray-gowned in fog, gold-girdled with the gloom  
Of tawny sunsets ; burdened with perfume  
Of rain-wet uplands, chilly with the mist ;  
And all the beauty of the fire-kissed  
Cold forests crimsoning thy indolent way,  
Odorous of death and drowsy with decay.  
I think of thee as seated 'mid the showers  
Of languid leaves that cover up the flowers,—  
The little flower-sisterhoods, whom June  
Once gave wild sweetness to, as to a tune  
A singer gives her soul's wild melody,—  
Watching the squirrel store his granary.  
Or, 'mid old orchards, I have pictured thee :  
Thy hair's profusion blown about thy back ;  
One lovely shoulder bathed with gypsy black ;  
Upon thy palm one nestling cheek, and sweet  
The rosy russets tumbled at thy feet.

Was it a voice lamenting for the flowers ?  
Or heart-sick bird that sang of happier hours ?  
A cricket dirging days that soon must die ?  
Or did the ghost of Summer wander by ?

## SUNSET IN AUTUMN

Blood-colored oaks, that stand against a sky of  
gold and brass ;  
Gaunt slopes, on which the bleak leaves glow of  
brier and sassafras,  
And broom-sedge strips of smoky pink and pearl-  
gray clumps of grass  
In which, beneath the ragged sky, the rain pools  
gleam like glass.

From west to east, from wood to wood, along the  
forest-side,  
The winds,— the sowers of the Lord,— with  
thunderous footsteps stride ;  
Their stormy hands rain acorns down ; and mad  
leaves, wildly dyed,  
Like tatters of their rushing cloaks, stream round  
them far and wide.

The frail leaf-cricket in the weeds sounds its far  
fairy-bell ;  
And like a torch of phantom ray the milkweed's  
windy shell

## SUNSET IN AUTUMN

Glimmers; while, wrapped in withered dreams,  
the wet, autumnal smell  
Of loam and leaf, like Fall's own ghost, steals  
over field and dell.

The oaks, against a copper sky — o'er which, like  
some black lake  
Of Dis, bronze clouds, (like surges fringed with  
sullen fire) break —  
Loom sombre as Doom's citadel above the vales  
that make  
A pathway to a land of mist the moon's pale feet  
shall take.

Now, dyed with burning carbuncle, a limbo-  
litten pane,  
Red in wild walls of storm, the west opens to hill  
and plain,  
On which the wild-geese ink themselves, a far  
triangled train;  
And then the shuttering clouds close down —  
and night it comes again.

## CONTENT

When I behold how some pursue  
Fame that is Care's embodiment,  
Or fortune, whose false face looks true,—  
An humble home with sweet content  
Is all I ask for me and you.

An humble home, where pigeons coo,  
Whose path leads under breezy lines  
Of frosty-berried cedars to  
A gate, one mass of trumpet-vines,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

A garden, which, all summer through,  
The roses old make redolent,  
And morning-glories, gay of hue,  
And tansy with its homely scent,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

An orchard, that the pippins strew,  
From whose bruised gold the juices spring;  
A vineyard, where the grapes hang blue,

## CONTENT

Wine-big and ripe for vintaging,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

A lane, that leads to some far view  
Of forest or of fallow-land,  
Bloomed o'er of rose and meadow-rue,  
Each with a bee in its hot hand,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

At morn, a pathway deep with dew,  
And birds that vary time and tune;  
At eve, a sunset avenue,  
And whippoorwills that haunt the moon,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

Dear heart, with wants so small and few,  
And faith, that 's better far than gold,  
A lowly friend; a child or two,  
To care for us when we are old,  
Is all I ask for me and you.

## OCTOBER

Long hosts of sunlight, and the bright wind blows  
A tourney-trumpet on the listed hill;  
Past is the splendor of the royal rose  
And duchess daffodil.

Crowned queen of beauty, in the garden's space,  
Strong daughter of a bitter race and bold,  
A ragged beggar with a lovely face,  
Reigns the sad marigold.

And I, who sought June's butterfly for days,  
Now find it — like a coreopsis bloom —  
Amber and seal, rain-murdered 'neath the blaze  
Of this sunflower's plume.

Here drones the bee; and there, sky-voyaging  
wings  
Dare the blue gulfs of heaven: the last song  
The red-bird flings me as adieu, still rings  
Upon that pear-tree's prong.

## OCTOBER

No angry sunset brims with rubier red  
The bowl of heaven than the days, indeed,  
Pour in the blossoms of this salvia-bed  
Where each leaf seems to bleed.

And where the wood-gnats dance, a little mist,  
Above the efforts of the weedy stream,  
The girl, October, tired of the tryst,  
Dreams a diviner dream.

One foot just dipping the caressing wave,  
One knee at languid angle; locks that drown  
Hands nut-stained; hazel-eyed, she lies, and  
grave,  
Watching the leaves drift down.

## DISCOVERY

What is it now that I shall seek  
Where woods dip downward, in the hills?—  
A mossy nook, a ferny creek,  
And May among the daffodils.

Or in the valley's vistaed glow,  
Past rocks of terraced trumpet-vines,  
Shall I behold her coming slow,  
Sweet May, among the columbines?

With red-bud cheeks and bluet eyes,  
Big eyes, the homes of happiness,  
To meet me with the old surprise,  
Her hoiden hair all bonnetless.

Who waits for me, where, note for note,  
The birds make glad the forest trees?  
A dogwood blossom at her throat,  
My May among th' anemones.

As sweetheart breezes kiss the blooms,  
And dewdrops drink the moon's bright beams,  
My soul shall kiss her lips' perfumes,  
And drain the magic of her dreams.

## THE OLD SPRING

### I

Under rocks whereon the rose  
Like a strip of morning glows;  
Where the azure-throated newt  
Drowses on the twisted root;  
And the brown bees, humming homeward,  
Stop to suck the honeydew;  
Fern and leaf-hid gleaming gloamward,  
Drips the wildwood spring I knew,  
Drips the spring my boyhood knew.

### II

Myrrh and music everywhere  
Haunt its cascades — like the hair  
That a Naiad tosses cool,  
Swimming strangely beautiful,  
With white fragrance for her bosom,  
And her mouth a breath of song:—  
Under leaf and branch and blossom  
Flows the woodland spring along,  
Sparkling, singing flows along.

## THE OLD SPRING

### III

Still the wet wan mornings touch  
Its gray rocks, perhaps ; and such  
Slender stars as dusk may have  
Pierce the rose that roofs its wave ;  
Still the thrush may call at noontide  
And the whippoorwill at night ;  
Nevermore, by sun or moontide,  
Shall I see it gliding white,  
Falling, flowing, wild and white.

## THE FOREST SPRING

Push back the brambles, berry-blue;  
The hollowed spring is full in view:  
Deep-tangled with luxuriant fern  
Ripples its rock-embedded urn.

Not for the loneliness that keeps  
The coigne wherein its crystal sleeps;  
Not for wild butterflies that sway  
Their pansy pinions all the day  
Above its mirror; nor the bee,  
Nor dragon-fly, that, passing, see  
Themselves reflected in its spar;  
Not for the one white liquid star  
That twinkles in its firmament;  
Nor moon-shot clouds, so slowly sent  
Athwart it when the kindly night  
Beads its long grasses with the light  
Small jewels of the dimpled dew:  
Not for the day's inverted blue,  
Nor the quaint, dimly colored stones  
That dance within it where it moans;

### THE FOREST SPRING

Not for all these I love to sit  
In silence and to gaze in it.  
But, lo! a nymph with merry eyes  
Greets mine within its laughing skies ;  
A glimmering, shimmering nymph who plays  
All the long fragrant summer days  
With instant sights of bees and birds,  
And talks with them in water-words ;  
And for whose nakedness the air  
Weaves moony mists ; and on whose hair,  
Unfilleted, the night will set  
That lone star as a coronet.

## THE HILLS

There is no joy of earth that thrills  
My bosom like the far-off hills!  
Th' unchanging hills, that, shadowy,  
Beckon our mutability  
To follow and to gaze upon  
Foundations of the dusk and dawn.  
Meseems the very heavens are massed  
Upon their shoulders, vague and vast  
With all the skyey burden of  
The winds and clouds and stars above.  
Lo, how they sit before us, seeing  
The laws that give all Beauty being!  
Behold! to them, when dawn draws near,  
The nomads of the air appear,  
Unfolding crimson camps of day  
In brilliant bands; then march away;  
And under burning battlements  
Of evening plant their tinted tents.  
The truth of olden myths, that brood  
By haunted stream and haunted wood,  
They see; and feel the happiness

## THE HILLS

Of old at which we only guess:  
The dreams, the ancients loved and knew,  
Still as their rocks and trees are true:  
Not otherwise than presences  
The tempest and the calm to these:  
One, shouting on them all the night,  
Black-limbed and veined with lambent light:  
The other, with the ministry  
Of all soft things that company  
With music — whose embodied form  
Fills all the solitude with charm  
Of leaves and waters and the peace  
Of bird-begotten melodies —  
And who at night doth still confer  
With the mild moon, that telleth her  
Pale tale of lonely love, until  
Wan shadows of her passion fill  
The heights with shapes that glimmer by  
Clad on with sleep and memory.

## THE SONG OF THE THRUSH

Overhead, overhead a wood thrush flutes,  
And it seems to me  
All the sweet words in the world,  
Married to melody, could not express  
What its few, wild notes,  
Inspired, and simple, and free, express,  
Say to me  
Of expectation and woodland mystery,  
Dreams, and wonder-visions never appearing,  
Remote and unattainably beautiful —  
O indescribable song!  
Song of the wild brown thrush!  
O June! O love! O youth!  
Of you, of you it speaks to me!  
Of the lost, the irremediable,  
The indescribably fair and far and yet to be  
    found;  
The mysteriously hidden, too:  
The lure of the undiscoverable calling, calling,  
Bidding me on and on,  
In the voice of all my longings,  
Down the dim, the deep, the cadenced aisles of  
    the forest.

## TRANSMUTATION

To me all beauty that I see  
Is melody made visible:  
An earth-translated state, may be,  
Of music heard in Heaven or Hell.

Out of some love-impassioned strain  
Of saints, the rose evolved its bloom;  
And, dreaming of it here again,  
Perhaps relives it as perfume.

Out of some chant, that demons sing  
Of hate and pain, the sunset grew;  
And, haply, still remembering,  
Relives it here as some wild hue.

## FROST

Magician he, who, autumn nights,  
Down from the starry darkness whirls ;  
Heav'n's harlequin, whose spangled tights  
And wand are powdered thick with pearls.

Through him each pane presents a scene,  
A Lilliputian landscape, where  
The world is white instead of green,  
And trees and houses hang in air.

Where Elfins gambol and delight,  
And bow the jewelled bells of flowers ;  
Where upside-down we see the night  
With many moons and meteor showers.

And surely in his wand and hand  
Lies Midas magic, for, behold,  
Some morn we wake and find the land,  
Both field and forest, turned to gold.

## ADVENTURERS

Seemingly over the hilltops,  
Possibly under the hills,  
A tireless wing that never drops,  
And a song that never stills.

Epics heard on the stars' lips?  
Lyrics read in the dew?—  
To sing the song at our finger-tips,  
And live the world anew!

Cavaliers of the Cortés kind,  
Bold and free and strong,—  
And, oh, for a fine and muscular mind  
To sing a New-World's song!

Sailing seas of the silver morn,  
Blown of its balm and spice,  
To put the Old-World art to scorn  
At the price of any price!

Danger, death, but the hope high!  
God's, though the purpose fail!—  
Into the deeds of a vaster sky  
Sailing a dauntless sail.

## INVOCATION

### I

O Life! O Death; O God!  
Have we not striven?  
Have we not known Thee, God,  
As Thy stars know Heaven?  
Have we not held Thee true,  
True as Thy deepest,  
Sweet and immaculate blue  
Heaven whence rains Thy dew!  
Have we not *known* Thee true,  
O God who keepest!

### II

O God, our Father, God!—  
Who gav'st us fire,  
To rise above the sod,  
To soar, aspire—  
What though we strive and strive,  
And all our soul says “live”?  
Will not the scorn of men,

## INVOCATION

Like some wild bird, again  
Falcon it down with sneers,  
As often in past years?  
And, O sun-centered high,  
    Thou, too, who 'rt Poet,  
Beneath Thy seeing sky  
Each day new Keatses die,  
Crying, "Why should we try?  
That which we seek 's a lie!"—  
Why is this so?—O why?—  
    Thou who dost know it!

## III

We know Thee beautiful,  
    We know Thee bitter!  
Help Thou!—Men's eyes are dull,  
O God most beautiful!  
Make Thou their souls less full  
    Of things mere glitter.  
Dost Thou not see our tears?  
Dost Thou not hear the years  
Treading our hearts to shards,  
O Lord of all the Lords?—  
Give heed, O God of Hosts,  
There 'mid Thy glorious ghosts,  
    Most high and holy!

## INVOCATION

Have mercy on our tears!  
Have mercy on our years!  
Our strivings and our fears,  
O Lord of lordly peers,  
On us, so lowly!

## IV

On us, so fondly fain  
To tell what mother-pain  
Of Nature haunts the rain.

On us, so glad to show  
What sorrow wings the snow,  
And her wild winds that blow.

Us, who interpret right  
Her mystic rose of light,  
Her moony rune of night.

Us, who have utterance for  
Each warm, flame-hearted star  
That stammers from afar.

Who hear the tears and sighs  
Of every bud that dies  
While heav'n's dew on it lies.

## INVOCATION

Who see the power that dowers  
The wildwood bosks and bowers  
With musk and sap of flowers.

Who see what no man sees  
In water, earth and breeze,  
And in the hearts of trees.

Turn not away Thy light,  
O God!—Our strength is slight!  
Help us who breast the height!  
Have mercy, Infinite!  
Have mercy!

## THE DEATH OF LOVE

So Love is dead, the Love we knew of old!  
And in the sorrow of our heart's hushed halls  
A lute lies broken and a rose-flower falls;  
Love's house stands empty and his hearth lies  
cold.

Lone in dim places, where sweet vows were told,  
In walks grown desolate, by ruined walls  
Beauty decays; and on their pedestals  
Dreams crumble, and th' immortal gods are  
mold.

Music is slain or sleeps; one voice alone,  
One voice awakes, and like a wandering ghost  
Haunts all the echoing chambers of the Past —  
The voice of Memory, that stills to stone  
The soul that hears; the mind, that, utterly  
lost,  
Before its beautiful presence stands aghast.

## UNANSWERED

How long ago it is since we went Maying!

Since she and I went Maying long ago!

The years have left my forehead lined, I know,  
Have thinned my hair around the temples gray-  
ing.

Ah, time will change us: yea, I hear it saying —  
“ She, too, grows old: the face of rose and  
snow

Has lost its freshness: in the hair’s brown glow  
Some strands of silver sadly, too, are straying.  
The form you knew, whose beauty so enselled,

Has lost the liteness of its loveliness:

And all the gladness that her blue eyes held  
Tears and the world have hardened with dis-  
tress.” —

“ True! true! ” I answer, “ O ye years that part!  
These things are changed — but is her heart,  
her heart? ”

## LOVE, THE INTERPRETER

Thou art the music that I hear in sleep,  
The poetry that lures me on in dreams;  
The magic, thou, that holds my thought with  
themes  
Of young romance in revery's mystic keep.—  
The lily's aura, and the damask deep  
That clothes the rose; the whispering soul that  
seems  
To haunt the wind; the rainbow light that  
streams,  
Like some wild spirit, 'thwart the cataract's  
leap—  
Are glimmerings of thee and thy loveliness,  
Pervading all my world; interpreting  
The marvel and the wonder these disclose:  
For, lacking thee, to me were meaningless  
Life, love, and hope, the joy of everything,  
And all the beauty that the wide world knows.

## LOVE DESPISED

Why not resolve and hunt it from one's heart?

    This love, this god and fiend, that makes a  
        hell

    Of all one's life, in ways no tongue can tell,  
No mind divine, nor any word impart.

    Would not one think the slights that make hearts  
        smart,

    The ice of love's disdain, the wintry well

    Of love's disfavor, otherwise would quell?

    Or school one's nature, too, to its own art?

    Why will men cringe and cry forever here

    For that which, once obtained, may prove a  
        curse?

    Why not remember that, however fair,  
Decay is wed to Beauty? that each year

    Robs somewhat from the riches of her purse,  
Until at last her house of pride stands bare?

## PEARLS

Baroque, but beautiful, between the lunes,  
The valves of nacre of a mussel-shell,  
Behold, a pearl! shaped like the burnished bell  
Of some strange blossom that long afternoons  
Of summer coax to open: all the moon's  
Chaste lustre in it; hues that only dwell  
With purity. . . . It takes me, like a spell,  
Back to a day when, whistling truant tunes,  
A barefoot boy I waded 'mid the rocks,  
Searching for shells strewn in the creek's slow  
swirl,  
Unconscious of the pearls that round me lay:  
While, 'mid wild-roses,— all her tomboy locks  
Blond-blowing,— stood, unnoticed then, a girl,  
My sweetheart once, the pearl I flung away.

## THE WOMAN SPEAKS

Why have you come?—To see me in my  
shame?

A thing to spit upon, despise and scorn?—  
You, you who ask me! You, by whom was  
torn,

Then cast aside, like some vile rag, my name!  
What shelter could you give me, now, that  
blame

And loathing would not share? that wolves  
of vice

Would not besiege with eyes of glaring ice?  
Wherein Sin sat not with her face of flame?

‘You love me’?—God!—If yours be love,  
for lust

Hell must invent another synonym!

If yours be love, then whoredom is the way  
To Heaven and God! and not with soul but  
dust

Must burn the faces of the Cherubim,—  
O beast of beasts, if yours be love, I say!

## OF THE SLUMS

Red-faced as old carousal, and with eyes  
A hard, hot blue; her hair a frowsy flame,  
Bold, dowdy bosomed, from her window-  
frame  
She leans, her mouth all insult and all lies.  
Or slattern-slipped and in sluttish gown,  
With ribald mirth and words too vile to name,  
A new Doll Tearsheet, glorying in her shame,  
Armed with her Falstaff now she takes the town.  
The flaring lights of alley-way saloons,  
The reek of hideous gutters and black oaths  
Of drunkenness from vice-infested dens,  
Are to her senses what the silvery moon's  
Chaste splendor is, and what the blossoming  
growths  
Of Earth and bird-song are to Innocence.

## LIGHT AND WIND

Where, through the myriad leaves of many trees,  
The daylight falls, beryl and chrysoprase,  
The glamour and the glimmer of its rays  
Seem visible music, tangible melodies:  
Light that is music; music that one sees—  
Wagnerian music — where forever sways  
The spirit of romance, and gods and fays  
Take form, clad on with dreams and mysteries.  
And now the wind's transmuting necromance  
Touches the light and makes it fall and rise,  
Vocal, a harp of multitudinous waves  
That speaks as ocean speaks — an utterance  
Of far-off whispers, mermaid-murmuring  
sighs —  
Pelagian, vast, deep down in coral caves.

## THE WINDS

Those hewers of the clouds, the Winds,—that  
lair  
At the four compass-points,—are out to-night;  
I hear their sandals trample on the height,  
I hear their voices trumpet through the air:  
Builders of Storm, God's workmen, now they  
bear,  
Up the steep stair of sky, on backs of might,  
Huge tempest bulks, while,—sweat that blinds  
their sight,—  
The rain is shaken from tumultuous hair:  
Now, sweepers of the firmament, they broom,  
Like gathered dust, the rolling mists along  
Heaven's floors of sapphire; all the beautiful  
blue  
Of skyey corridor and aëry room  
Preparing, with large laughter and loud song,  
For the white moon and stars to wander  
through.

## TOUCHES

In heavens of rivered blue, that sunset dyes  
With glaucous flame, deep in the west the day  
Stands Midas-like ; or, wading on his way,  
Touches with splendor all the twilight skies.  
Each cloud that, like a stepping-stone, he tries  
With rosy foot, transforms its sober gray  
To blazing gold ; while, ray on crystal ray,  
Within his wake the stars like bubbles rise.  
So should the artist in his work accord  
All things with beauty, and communicate  
His soul's high magic and divinity  
To all he does ; and, hoping no reward,  
Toil onward, making darkness aureate  
With light of worlds that be and are to be.

## EARTH AND MOON

I saw the day like some great monarch die,  
Gold-couched, behind the clouds' rich tap-  
estries.

Then, purple-sandaled, clothed in silences  
Of sleep, through halls of skyey lazuli,  
The twilight, like a mourning queen, trailed by,  
Dim-paged of dreams and shadowy mysteries ;  
And now the night, the star-robed child of  
these,

In meditative loveliness draws nigh.

Earth,— like to Romeo,— deep in dew and scent,  
Beneath Heaven's window, watching till a  
light,

Like some white blossom, in its square be  
set,—

Lifts a faint face unto the firmament,  
That, with the moon, grows gradually bright,  
Bidding him climb and clasp his Juliet.

## DUSK

Corn-colored clouds upon a sky of gold,  
And 'mid their sheaves,— where, like a daisy-  
bloom  
Left by the reapers to the gathering gloom,  
The star of twilight flames,— as Ruth, 't is told,  
Dreamed homesick 'mid the harvest fields of old,  
The Dusk goes gleaning color and perfume  
From Bible slopes of heaven, that illume  
Her pensive beauty deep in shadows stoled.  
Hushed is the forest; and blue vale and hill  
Are still, save for the brooklet, sleepily  
Stumbling the stone with one foam-fluttering  
foot:  
Save for the note of one far whippoorwill,  
And in my heart *her* name,— like some sweet  
bee  
Within a rose,— blowing a fairy flute.

## SEPTEMBER

The bubbled blue of morning-glory spires,  
Balloon-blown foam of moonflowers, and  
sweet snows  
Of clematis, through which September goes,  
Song-hearted, rich in realized desires,  
Are flanked with hotter hues: with tawny fires  
Of acrid marigolds,—that light long rows  
Of lamps,—and salvias, red as day's red  
close,—  
That torches seem,—by which the Month at-  
tires  
Barbaric beauty; like some Asian queen,  
Towering imperial in her two-fold crown  
Of harvest and of vintage; all her form  
Gold and majestic purple: in her mien  
The might of motherhood; her baby brown,  
Abundance, high on one exultant arm.

## THE END OF SUMMER

Pods are the poppies, and slim spires of pods  
The hollyhocks ; the balsam's pearly bredes  
Of rose-stained snow are little sacs of seeds  
Collapsing at a touch ; the lote, that sods  
The pond with green, has changed its flowers to  
rods  
And discs of vesicles ; and all the weeds,  
Around the sleepy water and its reeds,  
Are one white smoke of seeded silk that nods.  
Summer is dead, ay me ! sweet Summer 's dead !  
The sunset clouds have built her funeral pyre,  
Through which, e'en now, runs subterranean  
fire :  
While from the East, as from a garden-bed,  
Mist-vined, the Dusk lifts her broad moon —  
like some  
Great golden melon — saying, " Fall has  
come."

## THE PASSING GLORY

Slow sinks the sun,—a great carbuncle ball  
Red in the cavern of a sombre cloud,—  
And in her garden, where the dense weeds  
    crowd,  
Among her dying asters stands the Fall,  
Like some lone woman in a ruined hall,  
    Dreaming of desolation and the shroud;  
Or through decaying woodlands goes, down-  
    bowed,  
Hugging the tatters of her gipsy shawl.  
The gaunt wind rises, like an angry hand,  
    And sweeps the sprawling spider from its web,  
    Smites frantic music in the twilight's ear;  
And all around, like melancholy sand,  
    Rains dead leaves down — wild leaves, that  
    mark the ebb,  
In Earth's dark hour-glass, of another year.

## PROTOTYPES

Whether it be that we in letters trace  
The pure exactness of a woodbird's strain,  
And name it song; or with the brush attain  
The high perfection of a wildflower's face;  
Or mold in difficult marble all the grace  
We know as man; or from the wind and rain  
Catch elemental rapture of refrain  
And mark in music to due time and place:  
The aim of art is Nature; to unfold  
Her truth and beauty to the souls of men  
In close suggestions; in whose forms is cast  
Nothing so new but 't is long eons old;  
Nothing so old but 't is as young as when  
The mind conceived it in the ages past.

## SUPERSTITION

In the waste places, in the sinister night,  
When the wood whispers like a wandering  
mind,  
And silence sits and listens to the wind,  
Or, 'mid the rocks, to some wild torrent's flight;  
Bat-browed thou wadest with thy wisp of light  
Among black pools the moon can never find;  
Or, owlet-eyed, thou hootest to the blind  
Deep darkness from some cave or haunted  
height.  
He who beholds but once thy fearsome face,  
Never again shall walk alone! but wan  
And terrible attendants shall be his—  
Unutterable things that have no place  
In God or Beauty—that compel him on,  
Against all hope, where endless horror is.

## A. D. NINETEEN HUNDRED

War and Disaster, Famine and Pestilence,  
Vaunt-couriers of the Century that comes,  
Behold them shaking their tremendous plumes  
Above the world! Lo, all the air grows dense  
With rumors of destruction and a sense,  
Cadaverous, of corpses and of tombs  
Predestined; while,—like monsters in the  
glooms,—  
Bristling with battle, shadowy and immense,  
The Nations rise in dread apocalypse.—  
Where now the boast Earth makes of civiliza-  
tion?  
Its brag of Christianity?—In vain  
We seek to see them in the wild eclipse  
Of hell and horror and the devastation  
Of Death triumphant on his hills of slain.

## UNCALLED

As one, who, journeying westward with the sun,  
Beholds at length from the up-towering hills,  
Far-off, a land unspeakable beauty fills,  
Circeän peaks and vales of Avalon:  
And, sinking weary, watches, one by one,  
The big seas beat between; and knows it skills  
No more to try; that now, as Heaven wills,  
This is the helpless end, that all is done:  
So 't is with him, whom long a vision led  
In quest of Beauty—and who finds at last,  
She lies beyond his effort; all the waves  
Of all the world between them: while the dead,  
The myriad dead, who populate the Past  
With failure, hail him from forgotten graves.

and summer, and summer,  
autumn and winter, all shall 30

## QUATRAINS

## I

*Moths and Fireflies*

Since Fancy taught me in her school of spells  
I know her tricks: These are not moths at all,  
Nor fireflies; but masking Elfland belles  
Whose link-boys torch them to Titania's ball.

## II

*'Autumn Wildflowers'*

Like colored lanterns swung in Elfin towers,  
Wild morning-glories light the tangled ways,  
And, like the rosy rockets of the Fays,  
Burns the sloped crimson of the cardinal-flowers.

## III

*The Wind in the Pines*

When winds go organing through the pines  
On hill and headland, darkly gleaming,

## QUATRAINS

Meseems I hear sonorous lines  
Of Iliads that the woods are dreaming.

## IV

### *Opportunity*

Behold a hag whom Life denies a kiss  
As he rides questward in knighterrant-wise ;  
Only when he hath passed her is it his  
To know, too late, the Fairy in disguise.

## V

### *Dreams*

They mock the present and they haunt the past,  
And in the future there is naught agleam  
With hope, the soul desires, that at last  
The heart, pursuing, does not find a dream.

## AFTERWORD

*What vague traditions do the golden eves,  
What legends do the dawns  
Inscribe in fire on Heaven's azure leaves,  
The red sun colophons?*

*What ancient stories do the waters verse?  
What tales of war and love  
Do winds within the Earth's vast house re-  
hearse,  
God's stars stand guard above?*

*Would I could know them as they are ex-  
pressed  
In hue and melody!  
And say, in words, the beauties they suggest,  
Language their mystery!*

*And in one song magnificently rise,  
The music of the spheres,  
That more than marble should immortalize  
My name in after years.*

